CANTERBURY TALES.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

546

BY SOPHIA AND HARRIET LEE.

> ——— Fancy, like the finger of a clock,
> Runs the great circle, and is still at home.
>
> COWPER.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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THE

OFFICER'S TALE.

WILLIAM CAVENDISH.

He, who with tender delicacy bred,
Was nurs'd in luxury, on dainties fed;
And, when still evening summon'd him to rest,
Sank in soft down upon his mother's breast,
Must—Ah, what must he not?—

POPE'S HOMER.

"AND shall I wear my new clothes? And shall I have a watch that will go? And shall I keep it myself all day,—and hang it at my bed's head at night? And wo'n't the big boys pinch me, and beat me, and take it from me?"

Such were the interrogations that burst from the heart of little William Cavendish as his maid was undressing him on the eve of that day which was to form an æra in the history of his life.

"Fye, Master William!" said Mary; "I thought you had been more of a man than to cry thus. You know your papa will have you go to school, and there you will be made good."

"But I'll be good without going, Mary. Emma is not good: Emma cries: and yet they don't send her away."

"Gracious me! Master Cavendish; your mamma would break her heart if Miss Emma were to be sent away!—Well now, go to sleep, there's my precious! 'tis but a little while between this and Christmas; and then you'll come home, and have treats and

feasts,

feasts, and see your pretty mamma again, and play cards with Miss Emma, and forget all about the odious school." With this wise and comfortable exhortation, Mary tucked up her little charge and departed. The poor babe's heart was full; it bounded against the bed-clothes: but that balmy goddess who delights to repose on the rosy cheek of infancy soon closed his eye-lids, even while the bright dew-drop that moistened them still quivered on the lash. Morning, however, awaked little William, as it did many other Williams, once more to sorrow. As Mr. Cavendish had announced his intention of setting off early, the whole household were actually in motion before ten o'clock; and Mary, electrified by the sound of her lady's bell at so unusual an hour, hastened to prepare her little charge for his parting visit in his mother's dressing-room. Ah! how deeply did the recollection of that visit sink into the heart of the

sweet boy! Long years had rolled over his head when he still remembered the soft scent of the plants and exotics with which the apartment was perfumed from the ante-chamber: he could have drawn the plan of both: have described the exact situation of the doors; the drapery of the windows; and the very corner where the little Emma, his sister, raised on cushions, sat cutting paper while nurse waited behind. In the bloom of manhood, when Sorrow had struck her fangs into his heart, it still remembered the fond beatings of that moment.

A lovely young woman, whose maid was braiding her hair as it flowed over a white wrapper, started from her seat at his entrance, and folding him in her arms, poured over her darling those tears a mother only sheds. Sympathy or complaisance, however, soon produced a most audible accompaniment: and while even the manly heart

heart of William vented itself in sobs on the bosom of his pretty mamma; while Emma, screaming aloud, clung about them both, and nurse and Mary displayed their eloquence in a most pathetic strain of lamentation; the whole group was suddenly silenced by the entrance of a gentleman in a riding-coat, and ready booted for a journey. Mr. Cavendish, for it was he himself, was in the prime of life, and had the reputation of being handsome,

> ——" But care
> Sat on his faded cheek: yet under brows
> Of dauntless courage and considerate pride."

He paused for a moment at the door; then, passing silently across the room, continued for some time to gaze earnestly on his children and his ife. Little William involuntarily shrunk from the examination; and when, in a sober but determined tone, Mr. Cavendish inquired if he was ready, a brighter

brighter glow kindled in his cheek, and a faint affirmative dropt from his lips: while his *pretty mamma*, for so he had been accustomed to call her, and well indeed she deserved the epithet, again, in an agony of fondness, caught him to her bosom. Neither the memory nor the understanding of a boy of five years old was equal to retaining all the painful scene that followed: the image of his mother, clinging to him and bathing him with her tears, was the last that dwelt upon his eye; the voice of his father, as in an authoritative tone he commanded nurse to take away the little Emma, whose grief became too noisy, still rang upon his ear; and the carriage had driven rapidly through several streets of the metropolis, before William deigned to look around him, and inquire, in a half timid, half angry tone, "If his little horse should be of the same colour with that the groom rode?"

"I don't

"I don't think you will want a horse, William," said his father, gravely: "Had I not better buy you a doll?" William's heart kindled at this insult, which he perfectly comprehended.

"I have seen *you* cry," replied he, sullenly.

"Indeed!"

"Aye; not like Emma, nor mamma; but your eyes were wet."—Mr. Cavendish turned them on his son: there was probably somewhat in their expression that the latter understood: it is even possible that they were not then dry.

"You are now going, my dear William," said his father, after a pause, "to know the value of time: it is proper, therefore, that I should give you your watch. Examine

mine it: does it please you?"—Enchanted at the sight, William had at first no voice for thanks.

"The watch is very beautiful! but I don't like the seal, papa," said he, after a quarter of an hour's rapture had left him leisure to discover the faults of his new acquisition.

"And why so, my dear?"

"It has no coat of arms."

"And who taught *you* to know that?"

"Mamma.—Mamma gave Emma one."

"I have none to give my dear boy," said Mr. Cavendish, who had his reasons for the omission. "You must learn to deserve one. In the mean time I will strive to give

give you something better :—you shall have a head and a heart."

"I'd rather have a coat of arms," said the boy.

The seminary to which Mr. Cavendish conducted his son could not properly be termed a school. Situated in the bosom of a rich and lovely country, at the distance of seventy miles from London, on the edge of the New Forest, it had every advantage that an expensive establishment could afford; and it had one which all expensive establishments do not afford,—a preceptor who knew how to blend softness and indulgence with the steady judgement that prunes, without blighting, the exuberant blossoms of youth. Of twelve boys, little Cavendish was by much the youngest: his tender years seemed to privilege those stipulations which his father made in his favour, and he was received by

his

his school-fellows rather as their play-thing than their companion. Inheriting his mother's soft and delicate beauty, he was, indeed, upon the point of becoming a play-thing to the whole family. But William had not lived in his own without learning to be troublesome. Busy, active, assuming,—always ready to justify the baby-wrongs he dared to commit, he quickly ceased to be mamma's moppet; and, as his abilities were strong, and his observation uncommon, he soon ranked with boys considerably older than himself.

Christmas is come, and past, Mary, but William does not go home: on the contrary he hears little, or nothing, from thence. Overwhelmed by a calamity of which he was an unconscious sharer, the loss of the little Emma, his sister, whom a fever suddenly carried off, both father and mother seem to have forgotten they had a son.

The

The former has indeed once, or twice, printed him a letter; and the latter has sent him cakes, and sweet-meats, and play-things; and he has a pretty horse to ride, and goes into the parlour, and runs about the garden as much as he likes: but the garden and the parlour are not his home; and his little heart sometimes swells with an infantine presentiment of approaching sorrow. Alas! it fell upon him in its most grievous form; for what shall supply the place of a mother? William lost his ere the gloss was faded from the sables which he wore for his sister. The news, communicated with a tenderness that mother herself could scarcely have exceeded, yet burst like a clap of thunder. To him all the little wants and pleasures of babyhood had been hitherto comprised in that sweet and endearing name which he first had learnt to lisp. Of all his yet unformed and floating ideas, his pretty mamma had been the central point. On her bosom he

he had often rested his sick head; to her bosom, in all his little sorrows, had confided his sick heart. Sacred tie! inviolable cement! whose affecting influence, if duly cherished, consecrates affection by the most holy and most pure of unions! "Poor mamma! Poor Emma!" would William repeat at intervals, long after he had lost them.—"Death, grave,—" would he then add, though in other terms, "I understand not the meaning of the words!"—Ah, William! thou art yet to learn what years may roll over thy head, and leave them still a mystery!

The sensibility of the child, more deep than could have been expected at his age, seemed to take a constitutional, rather than a mental effect; for though it was not long before he recurred to his usual sports, and even appeared to pursue them with his usual activity, yet were his slumbers often inter-

rupted

rupted by starts: and Night presenting to his imagination her visionary world, the names of his mother, or his sister, would break in imperfect accents from his lips. The gentleman to whose care he was confided, sensible of the delicacy and importance of the charge, now urged Mr. Cavendish, if not to take him wholly, at least to indulge him, for a time, with that for which he so passionately longed: and it was at length announced to William that he should return *home*. But the little boy of five years old was now six; and reason was beginning to dawn upon the first impressions of nature. To the sense of restraint which his father's presence had formerly inspired, a vague and indistinct fear of him now succeeded. A stern brow, an authoritative tone, an air of abstraction that childhood comprehends not, and all the accidental variations which a suffering mind impresses on the features, were magnified, through the medium of the boy's imagination,

imagination, into something so terrific, that his cheek lost its colour, and his heart seemed to endure a sudden compression, when, on a fine morning in October, he was summoned from the play-ground to attend his father in the parlour. In the hall he was stopped by a faithful superintending domestic, who hastily washed his little hands and face, for he had been labouring, with no small diligence, at his own parterre, and conducted him, now again rosy with exercise and trepidation, to the parlour door. William laid his hand on the lock, but ventured not quite to turn it; the gentle motion which he occasioned, however, caused it to be opened on the other side, and he suddenly found himself in the presence of two gentlemen. With a beating heart, he ran towards the nearest: he was of the middle size, fair complexioned, and somewhat *embon-point*. The child stopt, gazed earnestly—it was not his father: but at a distance, with

with his back towards him, leaning his head upon his folded arms against the chimney-piece, stood another person.

"Cavendish," said the stranger, after having shaken hands with his young acquaintance, and saluted him with the title of 'little man;'—"Cavendish, will you not speak to your son?"

Mr. Cavendish looked not around; but, with a repulsive motion, waved the child from him.

"Take hold of your papa's hand, my dear!" said the stranger. William obeyed: the little pressure was irresistible: Mr. Cavendish raised his head, cast a momentary glance on the boy; and then, to the utter astonishment and terror of the latter, snatched him to his bosom, and gushed into an agony of tears. The joy, the trepida-

tion,

tion, and all the various emotions of William's heart, quickly blended in a similar flow: at intervals, however, he lifted up his head to look with surprise and curiosity on his father; while the other as often turned aside the boy's curls, and gazing earnestly, seemed in every little feature to peruse some sad memorial. Sir Arthur Montague (so the stranger was named) now interposed; and after speaking to Mr. Cavendish in a language which the child understood not, began to question the latter upon such topics as were likely to interest him. With the tears of his father had evaporated the terrors of William: holding him, therefore, fast by the hand, while his eyes sparkled, and his cheek glowed, he began—no less a history than that of his own life; a history which, though, according to all appearance, it might have been comprised in a very small compass, yet, by the force of gay spirits, and a lively imagination, he contrived,

trived, very innocently, to embellish with enough of the marvellous to make even his father smile; while Sir Arthur, whose countenance denoted all the sweetness and vivacity of his character, was enchanted with the child.

"Montague," said Mr. Cavendish, "do you recollect the description of the interview that past between Charles the First and his children, on the eve of his execution? Methinks that before us puts me in mind of it:—not but my head will probably be in its usual place to-morrow—but what will become of my heart?"

"You continue then resolved?"

"Absolutely.—Yet this boy"—

"Shall henceforward then be mine," said Sir Arthur.

"No, no," cried William, impatiently, "I will be my own papa's! You are very good-natured, but I love him best!"

"Darling of my heart!" cried his father, "cherish this love. Ah, William! when I am far away—when I have no other tie upon thee than the affecting remembrance of this hour—listen to me, my son," said he, taking him on his knee;—"I am going a long, long journey:—there will be a great deal of water between you and me—and a great many people—and there will be nobody to bless you for me, but God Almighty, and under him Sir Arthur Montague: and you must be good, my dear William, to deserve the blessing of God; and he will watch over you, and will by his power convey to my heart, in spite of the distance between us, a knowledge of all the little wants and wishes of yours. Even, my William! though you do not speak them,

them, he will teach me how to know them; and, if I can, I will make you rich—in return you must endeavour to make me happy: Sir Arthur Montague will tell you how: follow his advice; look upon him as a father: forsake not his counsel as you value my blessing. And when you are older—when the cruel world begins to assert its influence—learn early to command your passions—to regulate your understanding—to weigh what is due to others, and to feel the sacredness of such obligations as involve the happiness of those around you.—I speak to him, dear Montague," he added, turning to the latter, "a language he cannot understand: be you, at a future period, my interpreter. Above all, teach him to love one who, in every circumstance, and under every climate, will exist only for him."

The conversation that ensued between the two friends was prolonged to a very late

hour, at a small inn in the neighbourhood. Mr. Cavendish, on retiring, took his boy, who had been asleep for some time, to his bosom; and the next morning put him into a plain carriage and four with Sir Arthur; after which, stepping into a hack chaise himself, he was in a few days on his passage for India.

On this second parting, so unexpected and so sudden, William was even more vehemently affected than at first. No novelty of scene, no rapidity of motion, could, for some time, awaken his naturally gay spirits, or expel from his heart the image of his parents. To the most extreme depression and tears, at length succeeded questions innumerable: and had Sir Arthur not possessed an indulgence and tenderness of temper that defied provocation, he must infallibly have lost his patience before they were half way on their journey into Cumberland.

berland. But of all men living he was best calculated to conciliate the tempers of children. Full of a sportive vivacity, more fitted to the meridian of their faculties than to those of a maturer age; complying to all their whims, fond of their prattle, skilful in their little sports, he wanted only to be known to be adored: and though William's heart was far from being very flexible, and certainly more inclined to retain deep impressions than to receive superficial ones, yet was there so winning a sweetness in Sir Arthur as subdued even him. Again, the latter engaged the boy to recount the history of his hair-breadth 'scapes; amidst which, that from a troop of gipseys, who had fixed their haunt in the neighbouring forest, was by far the most interesting; and one to which Sir Arthur listened with the more attention, since the circumstance had really been of consequence enough to be communicated, with all its particulars, to

Mr.

Mr. Cavendish, as an argument for removing the child. William, after telling of the deep and tangled hollow in which they sat, described, with no small vehemence, though not in language thus elegantly poetical, the countenance and appearance of their leader:

"Her moving lips, her caldron brimming o'er,
"The drowsy brood that on her back she bore;
"Imps, in the barn, with mousing owlet bred,
"From rifled roost at nightly revel fed;
"Whose dark eyes flash'd thro' locks of blackest shade,
"When in the breeze the distant watch-dog bay'd."

Lavish and tempting had been her promises of carrying him to his papa, or rather, what in his estimation was still better, had it been possible, to his mamma. Narrowly had he, in fact, escaped the snare, and that only by the vigilance of those appointed to watch over him, from whom a fearless heart and a busy curiosity had induced him to stray. Of these qualities, however, he had

had ample cause to repent, when he found the troop preparing to execute by force what they could not accomplish by persuasion; and he was now pretty well convinced that this identical kettle, more wonderful in his description than that of Medea, was actually intended to boil, stew, or demolish him, in some way or the other.

"I am considering, my dear William," said Sir Arthur, after a thoughtful pause, when the latter had finished his story, "that if these wicked people ever meet with you again, they will find you out by your name; and then who can tell what may happen? Now you remember that you were christened William Montague Cavendish. To prevent mischief, therefore, we will call you, for the future, Master Montague, and that, you know, will make all safe." William's memory was, of course, not quite so retentive as Sir Arthur had chosen to suppose. Had it

been so, he would have known probably that he received no such name at the font: but he was well enough amused with the change, when he found that he should gain by it several nominal brothers in the persons of Sir Arthur's children, to whom he was, in fact, very distantly related; and so early was he habituated to their name, that it did not afterwards occur to him to doubt whether he had a right to it.

With a heart that still reverted towards England, Mr. Cavendish, meantime, prepared to encounter the glowing suns of India. Difficulties, sickness, sorrows, besieged him on all sides; nevertheless, he was incited by a mighty hope—a hope of such brilliance and magnitude, that hardly dared he unveil it to himself, much less did he venture to confide it to another. In placing his son under the protection of Sir Arthur Montague, he had done all that it was pos-

sible

sible for him then to do in life. The general worthiness of his friend's character he well knew: he also knew that he had the art of being happy; an art, to which Mr. Cavendish, instructed by sad experience, would sometimes fantastically give a higher name: nor was he, perhaps, wholly wrong. Unblemished rectitude, moderate desires, well-regulated affections, and a train of the minor virtues, are at least necessary towards attaining it: nourished by them, it assumes their colouring, and seems itself almost a virtue.

But though the outlines of Sir Arthur's history were known to his friend, the turbulent stream of life, hurrying them far apart in society, had left him no opportunity to observe those minuter traits of character which society itself creates. To be seen familiarly leaning on the arm of Mr. Montague, the only son of a baronet, heir to four thousand a year, *et pour comble de bonheur* a captain

tain in the Guards, had been at a very early period of life (for he was considerably the younger of the two) a dazzling distinction to Mr. Cavendish. Montague was then about eight-and-twenty, and his person was among the admired of the day. To stroll through St. James's-street, or Pall-Mall, in order to display this fine person, adorned with the glittering insignia of sash and gorget; to lounge at the fruit-shop or bet at the billiard table; were the chief employments of his life. Of these, and other pleasures, Mr. Cavendish had sometimes been the sharer; and a friendship thus founded seemed ill calculated for duration: but that smile which the remembrance of his own boyish fopperies extorted from Cavendish was always blended with indulgence for those of his associate. He recollected in him dissipation rather than vice, idleness rather than folly; and, even in his gayest moments, a certain kindness of heart, which those who have been the object of,

rarely

rarely forget. The career of Mr. Cavendish's dissipation had been cut short by a prudent father; but Sir Willoughby, who knew of no possible employment that his son could have in life but pleasure, was very far from inspecting either his conduct or feelings; yet from the latter he had, perhaps, somewhat to apprehend; for an enemy had crept into the heart of young Montague, from which his modes of living seemed calculated completely to shield him.

The family of Sir Willoughby consisted, besides his son, of three daughters, the eldest of whom was one-and-twenty, and had, to use the fashionable phrase, been brought out: the two younger, tall girls yet confined to the domestic circle, were assisted in their studies by Ellen Fitzherbert, a young woman not old enough to be their governess, too old to be their friend; but who,

who, under the title of companion, superintended their music, directed their taste in reading and elegant works, corrected their French and Italian, occasionally made their millinery, and performed such other offices, important or unimportant, in the family, as the judgement of the elder Miss Montague deemed necessary. In the features of Miss Fitzherbert there was nothing particularly captivating; but she had grace, manner, a sweet-toned voice, an exquisite taste in, and knowledge of, music; a secret consciousness of acquirements that veiled itself under the most delicate modesty, and the sort of countenance that bespeaks a heart which, already acquainted with misfortune, has closed its account with life ere that has well begun. Over the many-coloured scenes to which she had been a witness during her residence in the family of Sir Willoughby, his son alone had thrown a bright tint. His person, it has been before observed,

served, was handsome; his very fopperies were not of a disgusting kind, for he was always good-natured, always complaisant: the society he mingled in afforded him topics of conversation superior to that of a dull and libertine father, or frivolous sisters. The latter, at least the two younger ones, were charmed whenever they could get so fashionable a young man as their brother to retail the news of the day; and he had stretched his legs before the study fire many a long winter's evening, before it occurred to him to ask himself the question, of what attracted him there. For a time, he found his imagination sufficiently provided with an answer. "Dancing was a bore—he lost his money at cards—he had over-rode, or over-walked himself."—Any thing, every thing, by turns, supplied an excuse, till that hour at length arrived when the restless sentiment that had been insidiously gaining ground could no longer be mistaken; and

to

to his own astonishment, Mr. Montague discovered that he was in love. A thousand questions now rapidly succeed each other. "What sort of a mistress would Ellen Fitzherbert make? Was it in his power to persuade her to become such at all? And, the power supposed, had he the resolution?"— To the most material of these, that unequivocal consciousness a truly correct and chaste woman involuntarily impresses on the mind of her lover, at once replied No.

Yet Montague had not become master of his own secret, but through the medium of some of those responsive touches which the heart alone understands: and in direct opposition to every possible symptom that his knowledge of the world, and of women, had hitherto taught him to call love, he had an intuitive conviction that he was the object of it to Miss Fitzherbert. A warfare that lasted some time, succeeded in the heart

heart of Mr. Montague. Without sufficient confidence absolutely to affront the object of his passion, or vigour of mind enough to withdraw, he waited only for a species of encouragement, that should enable him to dare the first, or a return of the habitual inconstancy which would make the latter easy; but he waited in vain. And now came forward a formidable question indeed—Should he marry her?—A decided negative was the answer.—"Then I have nothing for it but a campaign in America."

To quit the dear delights of St. James's; the fashionable phalanx that, arm in arm, saunter through the Mall; to march over ice, instead of swallowing it in cream; to lie hard and live poorly; was a miserable alternative to Montague;—but it was better than a ridiculous match. Exchanging his commission, therefore, with a brother officer,—

to

to America he went; with no other emotion on the part of Sir Willoughby, than a secret surprise that so fine a young man as his son should be baffled by a woman (for it never entered his head to doubt whether he had explained himself to her), and a surprise still more lively, that, being baffled, he should think it worth his while to fly. Yet at the very season that Mr. Montague was crossing the Atlantic to risque a life apparently so little valued; when his family were giving fine suppers in fine rooms, and his fine friends were assembled in fine clothes to eat them; while the beaux in St. James's-street never missed, and the belles at the opera forgot him; in a solitary apartment of the house which he had voluntarily quitted, sat a young woman, anxiously perusing, at three o'clock in the morning, the fragment of an old newspaper, only to catch the sight of a name dear to her eyes, and which, conveyed from thence to her heart, might still its beat-

ings,

ings, or enable her to close the lids in slumber. The hitherto prosperous Montague had been taught by the world to estimate every blessing it could bestow, save affection:—he was soon to learn the full value of that.

An expedition of hazard was undertaken by a commander whose name and misfortunes are upon record. Morasses were to be traversed, woods to be penetrated: in one of these lay ambushed a body of Indians, who announced themselves by a sudden and unexpected discharge: the greater part of the advanced guard fell before it; and, first of these unfortunate men, trampled on by his companions, and buried in a mass of dry leaves and underwood, lay Mr. Montague.

Returning life was announced only by exquisite pain: and what a life! Under the thick shade of woods that seemed to ex-

clude human tread, and to be almost impervious to sun or star-light, the bloody hand of man had strewed carnage and desolation. To the hum of social multitudes had succeeded that profound stilness under which the stretched senses seem to ache: and the gaze he threw around presenting to him only the ghastly countenances of his fellow-sufferers, as they lay motionless and bleeding, induced him to close his eyes in silent and nameless agony. Nevertheless, bodily pain again collected sense to self; and on once more surveying his situation, he perceived that, from the nature of the ground on which he fell, he had been overlooked by the savages, whose horrible devastations were too visible in the persons of his miserable companions. It became now necessary that he should take advantage of the little day-light that remained, in order to discover, if possible, on what side the surviving Europeans had retreated. But the effort his safety obliged him to make, his

weakness

weakness rendered ineffectual; and after advancing a few steps, again he fainted, and again revived. Not, however, as before, did he find himself the sole existing being: a face, cold, hideous, scarred, and of a deep copper-colour, lay close to his own; and as the slow and convulsive respiration struck upon his cheek, occasioned a startling emotion that seemed once more to recal the tide of life. Again, however, the sense of pain superceded every other. The Indian, though not dead, was probably dying; *which* was to Montague hardly any longer a matter either of hope or fear, since the weakness occasioned by his own loss of blood would, he had reason to apprehend, soon prove as mortal as a more desperate wound. By a violent exertion of the little strength that remained to him, he now tore his handkerchief and linen, and, with a sort of pledget and bandage, attempted to stop the effusion. Near the Indian lay a wicker bottle filled

with spirits, of which he tasted, and once more began to breathe freely.—So too did his copper-coloured neighbour; who, opening a pair of wild and ferocious eyes, rolled them upon him with a stare of astonishment, and a convulsive sort of grin, that seemed the result of mingled pain and apprehension. From a companion whose complexion denoted him hostile, Montague, however, soon discerned that he had nothing to fear. One of his arms had been broken by a musquet-shot, the other had received a deep wound from a hanger, and both seemed almost useless. Silently and watchfully, therefore, the two strange associates continued to gaze on each other. The Indian was unarmed, but Montague still retained his sword; and the former appeared perfectly sensible of his own defenceless situation, as well as of the sort of forbearance which he observed in the countenance of his adversary; of whom, by suppli-

cating

cating looks, and some inarticulate phrases, he at length implored mercy and assistance. The kindness of heart which was ever a part of the character of Mr. Montague, now reminded him that this savage, uncouth indeed and hostile, was yet a human being; evidently very young, perhaps not merciless himself. Tearing, therefore, a farther portion of his linen, he made a feeble effort to bind up the arm of his fellow-sufferer: but while yet employed in this humane exertion, his head once more became giddy, his sight failed; and the same hideous yell that had declared the approach of the savages, and which now seemed to burst from some spot closely adjoining, was the last idea that impressed itself on his receding senses.

That horrible war-whoop which had appeared the knell of death, he, on his revival, perceived, with astonishment, to have been, in fact, the signal of deliverance. A faint

faint consciousness of having attempted some kindness, and of having probably received some, past across his mind; and the grim countenance of his former companion who, stretched on skins, lay not far distant, at length ascertained his uncertain recollections. The young savage, to whom he indeed owed his life, now again attempted to make himself understood, in a jargon which Montague with difficulty discovered to be French: of this, indeed, a few broken words alone were intelligible; but they were words of amity and protection; and the heir of Sir Willoughby, the gay, the gallant, the luxurious Arthur Montague, stretched on the ground in the bosom of a desert, barely shielded from the inclemency of the weather, now owned with gratitude the mercy of a savage; and secretly lifted up his heart to that Being, who, in the most ferocious state of society, yet binds man to man by the sacred sense of obligation.

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The history of five succeeding years was simply that which is common to every European prisoner whom, for whatever reason, the semi-barbarous tribes of Indians that frequent the back settlements agree to spare. To liberate him was not within the power of Wissekaw,—so his young protector was called: and an attempt to escape, as they soon removed into the interior of the country, would infallibly have thrown him into the power of some other savage nation, or have exposed him to the most merciless revenge from those with whom he resided. Thus situated, "his final hope seemed flat despair." Yet while the gratitude of the young Indian, that sentiment which, to the disgrace of civilisation, is often found most forcible in savage bosoms, held out a glimmering ray, Montague continued to suffer. Inured to hardships, and with a skin little fairer than that of his companions, he saw himself daily dragged further and further from

from social intercourse, and plunged into those recesses where Nature seems to delight in solitude. Yet it is not, perhaps, in the bosom of society that man learns most truly to appreciate himself. When his eye seems to wander over immensity—when his imagination catches visionary images of the sublime—when he looks above, around, beneath him, and seeing that all is great, yet feels within that intellectual principle which is greater still; it is then that, in direct opposition to the influence of the world, he instinctively becomes sensible of the insignificance of his frame, and of the grandeur of his mind. That of Montague was not calculated for lofty flights; yet did it sometimes soar a pitch beyond its native vigour; till the more active principle that ever lived in his heart would suddenly bring forward the image of distant England, and of Ellen Fitzherbert, and tempt him to renounce a being that seemed prolonged

only

only to suffer. It was on these occasions that Wissekaw gave him lessons of a fortitude which Europeans comparatively so little understand. Wissekaw had more sprightliness and spirit of inquiry than falls commonly to the share of North-American savages.—Having frequently accompanied his father to the French forts adjacent, the traffic there carried on had given him some vague ideas of European manners; and though curiosity rarely forms any part of the character of these wandering tribes, the want of it springs probably more from their total ignorance of the first rudiments of what they see and hear, than from a natural defect. Man seldom desires to know that of which he does not already indistinctly comprehend a little; and comprehending a little, perhaps as seldom stops there. The uncouth language in which Montague and his protector conversed became, in course of time, perfectly intelligible to both. Kind-

ness

ness insensibly produced familiarity, and familiarity led to confidence. Wissekaw was not without his mortifications; and he the more readily entered into those of his associate, as they were of the same nature with his own; for he was himself at that very time in most grievous want of a wife. Not indeed exactly such a wife as Ellen Fitzherbert; but one that would carry his dinner when he hunted, and afterwards cook it; make his fire, and prepare his bed of skins: all which, with various other laborious and humiliating offices, he, with indignation, had been hitherto obliged to execute for himself; not having yet performed any military achievement that, in the opinion of his tribe, entitled him to such a relief.

The coarseness of Wissekaw's ideas, however, extremely offended the more delicate ones of Montague; and, as he could by no means plead that it was his intention to employ

employ his wife in such servile offices, he strove, with great address, and with somewhat more credit to his imagination than his memory, to make his associate understand those delicate principles by which, he assured him, love was rendered, in polished countries, a sentiment of such superior vigour and importance. Kindling, like other theorists, with the fire of his own eloquence, he used every term their scanty stock of words would afford to paint that tender union of hearts, to which he declared the common and vulgar concerns of life so subordinate. He described in glowing language the sacred tie of gratitude and protection imposed on man towards those from whom he is to derive his happiness. He spoke of women as lovely in their dependence, interesting through their weakness, and most entitled to adoration when with blushes they bestow the grateful and undivided preference which constitutes the charm of love. He spoke, in short, as

hundreds

hundreds have spoken and daily speak; nor was Montague the first man who has talked by one system, and lived by another: but Wissekaw, who always understood most literally what came at all within the sphere of his comprehension, was so impressed, so affected with the ardour of his manner, and the fire of his eyes, that he insisted on their stopping to interchange upon the spot fresh tokens of eternal amity; and took an oath, according to the most sacred forms of his country, to effect the escape of his prisoner on the very first possible opportunity.

An engagement thus voluntary, and which certainly incurred a risk to him who tendered it, since Wissekaw was far from possessing authority enough to shelter himself from the resentment of his father, extremely affected Montague, and a considerable time elapsed ere the ardours of a first emotion subsided in either bosom.

"I shall

"I shall see my country then again!" said the young Englishman, fixing his eyes, though their sense was lost in abstraction upon the blue mountains that bounded the horizon, and the extended "contiguity of shade" that intervened.—"Yet when returned to England, what am I to do there?"—This sentence was so short that Wissekaw believed he perfectly understood it, and the answer was painted most expressively upon his face. Montague, whose thoughts had wandered wide from their first point, only smiled at the simplicity of the savage, and shook his head.

"I am very rich," said he, after a pause, "and she has nothing."

"Ah ke bonheur!" exclaimed Wissekaw, in his uncouth dialect.

"She is friendless, and I am the son of a great chief."

"Ah

"Ah ke bonheur!" again repeated the Indian.

Montague gently represented to him that he had mistaken the word, which, it was evident, ought to have been malheur.

"No understand," said Wissekaw, very gravely: then rolling his eyes with profound earnestness, as if to sum up all he could recollect of the preceding discourse; "White man," he added, in broken French, "love de woman to make happy. Stranger no care for her, he make friend:—she poor —he much glad—he make rich—he make de happy himself—Wissekaw much glad too."

Montague felt peevish and embarrassed. It was, indeed, no easy matter to descend from the sublime theory of passion and generosity to those qualifying clauses which make practice appear, in the case of the individual, often so utterly improper. And though

though Wissekaw had a very acute understanding, and even some idea of the power of the affections and the pleasure of obliging, yet these notions being so crude as to attach themselves almost wholly to actions, instead of words, Montague insensibly plunged deeper and deeper into what he deemed the necessary distinction between them; partly for the pleasure of developing his own system, and partly for that of enlightening the savage, of whom he was fully resolved to make a proselyte. In this project he would most probably have succeeded, but for an accident that happened in the interim; which was simply that of his becoming a proselyte himself;—in other words, he grew convinced that nothing in life could be so rational as to live for Miss Fitzherbert. From the moment that this idea acquired a decided influence, sleep fled from his night, and quiet from his day. The food which toil before had rendered sweet

grew

grew tasteless; one form alone floated before his imagination, and one only view engrossed his heart. It was not disappointed. Accident carried them not long after to that part of the banks of the Ohio where the Indians are accustomed to traffic: the opportunity was favourable; Wissekaw proved faithful to his promise; and Montague, after rewarding the kindness of the generous savage, at length turned his eyes around, and once more, with wonder and delight, saw himself encircled by Europeans. Anxious, and even painful, was the joy that took possession of his heart, when, after a short passage across the Atlantic, a stage-coach, into which, as it travelled all night, he had thrown himself on his arrival in England, set him down, at eight o'clock in the morning, in the centre of that immense metropolis which for nearly six long years he had not beheld. A December fog, dense, yellow, heavy, hung

over

over it: while the rays of a joyless sun penetrated far enough to gild the tops of the chimneys, but without power to warm the shivering beings that crept along the streets: some of them in colour not unlike his friend Wissekaw; but they were less fortunate, for they were not born in the wilds of America.

From Aldersgate Street to May Fair would once have been no inconsiderable walk for a St. James's-Street beau: this, however, was effected: but to effect an immediate entrance into the magnificent mansion of Sir Willoughby Montague seemed an enterprise infinitely more difficult: for the porter, not at all impressed with the complexion, dress, or address of his visitor, would have shut the door in his face, had not a house-maid, who was sallying forth with a pail, nearly fallen flat upon hers, with astonishment and terror, at what

she suspected to be the young captain's ghost. Yet was it chiefly by his voice that she recognised him; for his once handsome person had undergone a sufficient alteration, during his residence with his copper-coloured friends, to excite mirth, and even a momentary incredulity, in the minds of his English ones.

In the family of Sir Willoughby some considerable changes had taken place. His eldest daughter was dead, the second was married, the third lived with her sister in Cavendish Square, and Ellen Fitzherbert lived, as it appeared, no where: for of her not the least mention was made by Sir Willoughby, who, himself a cripple with the gout, and provided with a superintendant for his household that rendered daughters superfluous, seemed to think that while he, his mansion, and his equipages, remained above ground, all that was ma-

terial in life might be said to be *in statu quo*. So thought not his son, however. Turning with disgust from those splendid apartments which neither health, virtue, nor the affections illumined, he staid only long enough with his father to show that respect which the character demanded; and, having announced his approach by a hasty message, eagerly repaired to Cavendish Square, where he doubted not he should gain some intelligence of her whom he sought. His foot was almost on the steps of the house, when a splendid footman brushed hastily by him, with a most formidable rap; he was followed by two females, in one of whom Montague had scarcely discovered his youngest sister, altered and grown tall, when, by her side, pale, trembling, and ready to sink at sight of him, his heart, after a moment's pause, recognised Miss Fitzherbert. Hers had not been so dilatory: dress, distance, the lapse of time, the impression of suffering, all

that changes man to the eye of man, yet obliterates him not from the memory of fond and faithful woman. Forgetful of decorum, Montague snatched her to his bosom; and the embrace mutually exchanged gave them as decidedly to each other as though a thousand vows had passed between them:—those that passed soon after were irrevocable.

The match, however, was prosperous only in affection: it was in the power of Sir Willoughby to bequeath almost the whole of his estate from his son; and, by the exertion of that power, the latter found himself, not many years after, a baronet, whose whole riches consisted in a tender wife and three fine children; an income of about four hundred per annum in the "green solitudes" of Cumberland; a house little better than a farm, with the usual appendages of pigs, poultry, paddocks, and cows. The world was not sparing in its comments,

comments, either on the conduct or fate of Sir Arthur. The higher ranks censured his folly; the lower bewailed his misfortunes: the one considered him as deserting his duties; the other as robbed of his enjoyments: they were, perhaps, equally erroneous in their judgements; for neither class remembered that the man who is active in a narrow sphere, does more, in all respects, both for himself and others, than he who slumbers in an extensive one: and that the obscure Sir Arthur Montague, adored by his wife, honoured by his children, cherished by his acquaintance,—the best master, the best magistrate, the best man within his circle,—might justly claim, not merely a higher, but a happier rank in society, than had ever been enjoyed by the profligate father, the hard landlord, the corrupt senator, the long debilitated, and always narrow-minded baronet, then lying in state in May Fair.

It

It was at this period of Sir Arthur's life, that chance brought Mr. Cavendish, who was making the tour of the lakes on horseback, once again within his neighbourhood. Mr. Cavendish had himself been then married somewhat more than a twelvemonth; had a very young and exquisitely beautiful wife, a splendid establishment, and enough of the world in his character to look with surprise and concern upon the lot of his friend: four years after he entrusted to the protection of that friend his only and darling child.

Ellen, for she was still Ellen in heart and conduct, though the courtesy of the world called her my lady, received the boy with a tender sigh, to think that he should at so early an age want protection; and little Montague, for by that name he was now known, soon found himself perfectly at home among his young associates. Sir Arthur, who, with

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an affectionate heart, had both from nature and education a bounded mind, presided over their sports, and was, in fact, only the overgrown boy of the group. He delighted to ramble with them round the borders of the beautiful lake near which his house stood, to paddle with them on the water, to climb through the adjoining copse to the rude brow that overlooked the valley,

"And drink the spirit of the mountain gale."

The care of instruction was consigned to the curate of the village, a man well fitted to the task both in learning and merit; while Sir Arthur, after a day spent either in the pursuits of benevolence, or the gaiety of childhood, sat down, well pleased of an evening, to look in the eyes of a wife who lived but in his,—happy through the mere expansion of his own feelings, and the pleasure of making happy. It is not with

with impunity, however, that man procrastinates either in his pursuits or his morals. The years that Sir Arthur had spent in an irresolution but too well understood by its object, had neither turned the head, nor broken the heart of the woman he loved; but they had secretly snapt those finer springs of the constitution which neither heart nor head can wholly repair. The well-regulated mind of Ellen Fitzherbert had taught her to struggle with an ill-judged passion: it would have taught her to conquer it, had her lover's mind been equally vigorous; but the sickly hope which his conduct was ever calculated to cherish had tainted her stronger faculties, and happiness itself came too late. A consumptive tendency, not natural to her constitution, yet seemed hereditary to her children, and at the moment of giving them life, death sprang forth with it hand in hand. The malady at length seized upon herself. She suddenly grew

far

far more beautiful than she had ever yet been; her complexion cleared; her eyes assumed a sparkling lustre which they had not before known; her frame wasted into delicacy; her voice softened into languor; and a short cough, accompanied with a bright pink upon her cheek, announced the foe within,—not approaching in darkness and terrors, but cruelly borrowing the bright colours of youth, of health, and loveliness. Sir Arthur took the alarm;—air, diet, exercise, and perfect peace, were at once prescribed: but neither air, exercise, nor diet prevailed; the peace, indeed, was perfected.

"Let me look at her again!" said her weeping *protégé*, the little Montague; "let me look at her again! I never saw my own mamma when she was dead; but I dreamt of her often; and when I waked I prayed: and I am sure God heard me more then than

than he has ever done since, for I felt him in my heart."—The boy spoke truth! Sacred surely are the first tears we shed over those whom we fondly love. 'They turn thought inward,' and woe to such as rob mortality of its earliest purifying tribute!

With his wife vanished all that was bright or marking in the life of Sir Arthur; her understanding had directed, her activity had given spring to, the goodness of his heart. Her acquirements, her sprightliness, her affection, had invisibly presided over all his hours: the heaviness of character, often either incidental or natural to man, verges, in declining years, either to torpidity or vice; it is then that active and well-informed woman so happily fills the chasm of life, and, without being obtrusively any thing, becomes, in fact, almost every thing to her household. Sir Arthur felt acutely a loss which he justly deemed

irreparable;

irreparable: but time, that meliorates all griefs, insensibly subdued his; and his agricultural pursuits, which had long filled up his leisure, became enlarged by an accession of fortune bequeathed him through his youngest sister. With the other he kept up no intercourse from the time of his own marriage: a degradation which, as she hoped her son would be heir to Sir Willoughby, she had chosen to unite with the latter in resenting. That son, indeed, lived not to enjoy his advantages; but the lady, who considered her brother as a cipher in her world, was so indignant at the disposition of her younger sister's property, that the breach, before sufficiently wide, became insurmountable, and each seemed willing to obliterate all recollection of the other. It is, perhaps, not unworthy of notice in the eventful history of human life, that this same woman, on becoming a widow some few years after, married a

man

man as scantily endowed as Ellen Fitzherbert with the gifts of fortune, and far beneath her in those of nature.

Time, so rapid in its flight, is nevertheless often so uniform in its pace, that the accumulation of years alone tells us they are past. Montague was a young man, and Sir Arthur an old one, before he was quite prepared for either circumstance; yet even that indolence which daily grafted itself more and more on his character did not prevent his casting many a long and anxious look towards India. The continued residence of young Montague in his family matured a growing evil, which, though he had penetration enough indistinctly to foresee, he wanted judgement, and almost power, to obviate. The child had been irresistible, the boy was captivating, but the young man was already proud, impassioned; highly gifted by na-

ture

ture with every grace of person, and every promise of mind.

Sir Arthur knew the peculiar circumstances that attended his *protégé*: he saw that the elder Mr. Cavendish, whatever were his plans, had set his fortune, his life, nay, even the fate of his darling son, upon a cast; and that the latter was either to be great, or nothing. The career of his father had not, at first, been prosperous. In going to India he had rested his hopes upon a relation, whose rank and influence rendered every thing possible to him: that he had once been tenderly beloved by that relation he well knew; but he forgot to calculate the immense change that had since taken place in himself. When Mr. Cavendish was first noticed by Lord Montresor, he was young, gay, happy; full of promising talents, of high expectations, of never-failing spirits; inheriting from his father

ther a great commercial concern, and a property almost immense, there was scarcely any thing which his friends did not hope from him, perhaps nothing he did not hope for himself. He carried to India a broken fortune, a proud spirit, an embittered heart; no health, no gaiety, no happiness. Under these circumstances it was not wonderful that Lord Montresor found it difficult to recognise the young man whom he had formerly distinguished. He received him, however, with kindness, and would have employed him in a line that was likely one day to raise him to all that he could desire; but the vigour of Mr. Cavendish's mind was, for a time, absorbed; and the governor-general soon discovered that he was not to be employed. Unable to judge whether he had made his fate, or his fate had made him, Lord Montresor, nevertheless, did not forget that he was unfortunate and estimable; he continued, therefore, to retain him near

his

his person, and to amuse him with hopes for several years. Those years were almost a fearful blank in the life of Cavendish. Sometimes, starting from his day-dream, he would indulge the secret fever of his mind in long and wild letters to his son: then, recollecting that son was yet a child, he would again start to think that he must soon become a man;—soon wake to all the strong and turbulent influence of contending passions;—wake to feel

> "The proud man's scorn, th' oppressor's contumely,
> "The pangs of despised love."——

He would then dash away the pen—climb, in despite of a tropical sun, to some point whence he might view the white sails of the vessel that conveyed the dispatches, and, as they lessened before him, breathe upon his child a blessing too heart-breaking to be fashioned into words.

Of

Of letters thus written, a very few consequently ever reached Sir Arthur; nor had he discrimination enough to distinguish, in those that did, the effusions of a perturbed recollection from a sober and rational injunction. The energy with which Mr. Cavendish ever dwelt on one important secret, and the wild solicitude with which he enforced the necessity of its concealment from his son, rested, therefore, habitually and forcibly on the mind of his friend; and Montague himself was now become so tenderly endeared to the latter, that hardly could the beating heart of the father have claimed a fonder interest in his future fate. That formidable future, already, therefore, prest hard and close upon Sir Arthur, when a lingering but dangerous malady, with which he was attacked, by seeming to close the account to himself, brought to his imagination, with painful earnestness, the evils it might produce to his *éléve*. Of the baronet's landed property,

perty, only that small part was alienable which he had himself, by purchases, added to the estate, and of personal fortune he could hardly be said to have accumulated any. Not that he was wholly devoid of the wish to do so, or believed himself without the prospect. But Sir Arthur was among that unlucky, though numerous class of gentlemen-farmers, to whom every season is constantly adverse; whose crops are always spoilt by too much sun, or too much rain; too obstinate an adherence to an old plan, or the too zealous pursuit of a new one. He was besides generous and indulgent to a fault; consequently so often plundered, that no man had more reason to congratulate himself that there was a place in another world in which to garner his treasure, where "moths do not corrupt, nor thieves break in and steal;" for none such did he ever find in this. But as it is the property of some natures to sweeten every

thing with which they come in contact, so even dishonesty and idleness, in passing through the guileless medium of his imagination, seemed to lose somewhat of their grossness, and presented themselves to his judgement in qualifying and gentler forms. From this state of tranquillity, and all the sweet associations attendant upon a kind and benevolent temper, Sir Arthur suddenly sunk to languor and despondency. That calm sunshine with which the latter years of his life had been gilded, seemed wholly overcast; life itself hung by a frail and uncertain tenure; and he reflected, with poignant anxiety, that, in quitting it, he left there a young man of high passions, and a cultivated mind, without a profession, and without a friend.

It is the misfortune of characters in which reflexion does not predominate, that the necessity for it is peculiarly adverse to its

operation:

operation: perhaps in the whole circle of human, or rather inhuman employments, that of war was among the last which Mr. Cavendish would have chosen for his son; yet, from the powerful influence of early habit, and the confused state of Sir Arthur's ideas, it was the only one that presented itself to his imagination. The military art he had, both theoretically and practically, had sufficient opportunity to acquire, and, as he now believed, most fortunately, to impart. Under his auspices Montague had early learnt to play the soldier; and when ripening years transferred the sports of his childhood to a theme for his feelings, the baronet had found some difficulty in repressing that passion for arms which his own discourse first instilled. Glowing with the enthusiasm natural to a young and inexperienced heart, often did the young man tread in imagination the deserts of America, or the burning sands of India; impatient to spread the blessings of

 civilisation

civilisation and humanity, without being aware how frequently the means defeat the end, or how little that end has been even proposed by the polished savages who claim the title of conquerors.

The propensity which Sir Arthur had been at some pains to extinguish, he now, in the tumult and agitation of his mind, believed he had no other alternative than to rekindle. That of his young friend, however, he discovered, with regret, to be no longer directed to its former bent: nearer views and softer wishes had taken place of the bold career that fancy had formerly pictured; and though Montague conceded to a plan against which, indeed, he could not reasonably remonstrate, he conceded only. His character was of that mixed kind in which the stronger passions were continually blended with those minor ones contracted by habit and situation: for the former he had already

found

found an object; the latter became a lurking poison in his blood which Sir Arthur possessed not acuteness enough to discover. Alas! in the delicate office of educating the heart, so many nicer feelings are a necessary supplement to reason, that few indeed are the beings adequate to the task!

It was not, however, the fate of Montague only that strewed the pillow of Sir Arthur with thorns. He had a yet more delicate, though not more interesting charge to divide his attention; a charge over which he meditated with an anxiety he had never before experienced, in proportion as he became more sensible of the hazards attendant upon it. Amidst the changes that had taken place in the baronet's family upon the death of his wife, had been the removal of a young creature early committed to the protection of the latter. Miss Rochford, though even nobly descended, had, by the

folly

folly and dissipation of her father, been born under circumstances of peculiar distress. She was an orphan; and even in childhood blest, or curst, as fortune should decide, with that irresistible beauty which so often dazzles judgement, and confounds even wisdom. Lady Montague had been the saving angel of her mother; who, though educated in the highest and happiest hopes, finally reverted to this dear, and once humble friend, as the sole protector of her child: nor was the appeal fruitless even when the heart that made it ceased to beat; since to cherish the little Clara, as a wife for one of her own sons, was among the few romantic projects which Lady Montague ever formed. The overwhelming succession of calamities that swept both mother and children to one common grave, left to Sir Arthur the painful task of restoring Miss Rochford to those who were called her natural friends. But he had soon too much reason to regret

having

having given up his lovely charge. Under the roof of her aunt, Lady Selina, the sweet child "learnt to sigh ere she could know to sin;" and was finally, by a concurrence of events, returned to the guardianship of the good baronet, with an earnest request that he would place her, for a small stipend, under some respectable protection in the country. Happy was the day of her emancipation to the little Clara, who, in the bosom of nature and solitude, had early acquired those simple tastes and warm affections which, with a moderate degree of cultivation, give mind its best character, and life its truest zest.

In receiving her again to his protection, Sir Arthur was not, however, quite satisfied that he acted wisely. With the indecision therefore common to bounded minds, he attempted to find a medium where judgement would have told him that there could be none: and confining his precautions to

the

the single one of removing her from his own roof, he encouraged the hope that time and chance, if not the early return of Mr. Cavendish, would wholly separate her from Montague. Time fled indeed with rapid wing, but brought with it only a painful and increasing surmise that it was no longer in the power of chance to alienate two hearts thus early interwoven. Mutual misfortunes, personal charms, and habits of intimacy, had, in fact, all united to create a passionate love: and while each hovered around the bed of their mutual protector, his anxious eyes, quickened by apprehension, became but too fully apprised of the secret. It was a discovery peculiarly distressful. The mysterious circumstances that attended Montague's situation hardly left Sir Arthur the power of regulating his fate in any instance; yet such was the exigency of the occasion, that he seemed on the point of deciding it in all. And even the same cruel necessity that was about

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to plunge the young man into the world made the prohibition still less likely to be observed, which would tear him from the only individual remaining in it that he loved.

To the powerful passion that thus reigned in his heart, there was yet, however, a counterpoise. Clara, though ill able to make the fortune of the man she loved, was not wholly dowerless; she was besides allied to a family, at once narrow-minded and arrogant, and to them she would be responsible even for the conduct they deigned not to regulate, the fate in which they would never probably sympathise. Dear, therefore, as she was to her lover, Sir Arthur had no difficulty in perceiving, that he revolted from the idea of marking his own outset in life, by sacrificing any advantage she might possess there. It was far otherwise with Miss Rochford. Pride, interest, necessity, all make imperious claims on man,

man, the force of which his early knowledge of the world disposes him rarely to deny: but the heart of woman naturally and powerfully inclines to the side of tenderness, since almost every good she expects in life is to be derived from the affections she feels, or those she inspires. Clara had yet learnt to make no other estimate of life itself. The house of Lady Selina, to which she was, of necessity, about to return, was hateful to her imagination. Accustomed to believe that she should ever find her pleasures in the circle of her duties and her ties; gentle, natural; attached to her benefactor, to her lover, to simple and domestic enjoyments; she neither sought, nor desired any thing beyond them.—Guileless and unadulterated heart, should there be found one of either sex cruel enough to sully thee, how deep would be the sin! how severe ought to be the self-condemnation!

Sir

Sir Arthur reasoned ill, but he always felt rightly; and it was only necessary that any subject should become a question of the heart, and not of the head, to make him view it in its true light. Little as was his knowledge of the world, his observation still less, he was nevertheless too well informed to indulge those chimeras which the ardent imagination of a young man delighted to paint. He was aware that promotion was far from being the regular consequence of merit in a military life; and was not quite sure, though inclined to believe it, that love continued the inseparable attendant upon matrimony: these circumstances considered, his opinion was decisive. Yet, though refusing to sanction their contract, the lovers observed, with pleasure, that he sympathised in their hopes: and hardly was the prayer each breathed to heaven for the happiness of the other more fervent than that they mutually offered up for their indulgent and generous benefactor.

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The negative of Sir Arthur was decisive, however, only as it respected Mr. Cavendish.—"By what right, my children," would he say, "can I authorise a tie thus important? How shall I rob a parent of his first and dearest prerogative, and fix the fate of that son for whom his father is content to become an exile and a wanderer? Address yourself, my dear William, to yours! You only are left to him in the wreck of life: do not therefore rob him of all to which he clings; and be well assured that both your moral and worldly prosperity will depend on his approbation.—My little fortune or credit shall, in the interim, be employed in your service; and my sweet Clara will guard for her lover a heart which he will every day learn better how to deserve!"—That of Montague beat with complicated feelings as he obeyed the injunction of Sir Arthur; and the first genuine and frank communication of mind from a son to a father was compounded

pounded of all those various and interesting shades which their relative situations could not but create. Hurried away by a strong and impetuous passion, he at one moment demanded its object, as entitled to supercede every claim and every duty: those claims and duties then took their turn in his heart; a thousand imperfect, though affecting recollections, past across it,—and the image of the distant, perhaps suffering being to whom he was addressing himself, suffused his eyes with tears. He saw nothing—heard nothing but his father: when, at the very crisis of filial affection, the idea of a despot, crushing his hopes, and annihilating his right of choice, awakened that pride which ever formed a decided feature of his character, gave a new colour to his style, and breathed over it estrangement and haughtiness. "I throw myself," concluded he, at length, "on your tenderness—or rather on your justice.

I implore

I implore my happiness at your hands, as the dearest claim of my birth, and the richest benefit you can bestow. Imperfectly as I am informed of the motives that detain you from your country and your son, and painful as is the temporary alienation imposed on me, I pledge myself so to fill up life that my father shall never regret he gave mine a charm, nor blush should it be in his power to give it a distinction.—Yes!" continued he, with a proud but generous enthusiasm, "if your son prove not honourable, *renounce him!*"

The deep responsibility of him who challenges happiness as a reward of those virtues he is yet to prove, was unknown to Montague: nor was he sensible of the full import of his letter in other particulars, till too late: he then recollected, with useless regret, that to the strength of a natural tie he had now added a voluntary

appeal;

appeal; that months must elapse before the packet could reach its destination, more than months before the answer to it could arrive;—and that whether Sir Arthur lived or died in the interim, conceded, or was inflexible, the *fiat* was lodged beyond his jurisdiction: nor did this now escape the notice of Sir Arthur himself, who saw with pleasure the additional obligation imposed upon the lovers: yet, as *finesse* formed no part of his character, the idea was far from having occurred to him when he dictated the address; and the letters of Montague were even accompanied by others from himself, more fully explanatory of the temper, the connexions, and the heart of Miss Rochford. The deep though fruitless regret of the young man was now daily rendered more acute by her approaching departure for town; for Lady Selina, in whose character delicacy had very little share, had no sooner formed the resolution of

of receiving her niece at all, than she fancied that her arrangements made it necessary the latter should come to her directly. To be torn from her earliest and dearest protector would at any period have been painful to the affectionate heart of Clara; but the double separation, under circumstances thus gloomy, was peculiarly so: the indulgence of Sir Arthur's manners, and the sentiments which the lovers mutually entertained for him, had made his heart a sort of medium through which theirs could openly and freely blend; yet under his auspices they now believed they should meet no more:—sorrowful, therefore, was the parting, and ominous did the tears seem that were shed on all sides.

Sir Arthur's mind, thus relieved from the apprehension of a hasty and indiscreet union, nevertheless dwelt with sweet complacency on the hope of a future one: and had

had his constitution seconded the vigorous efforts he made to shake off languor and debility, his health would probably have undergone a rapid amendment. As it was, however, he did not grow worse; and the faculty began even to persuade themselves, that should his strength enable him to go through the winter, spring would do more in his favour than they had yet ventured to hope. But there was a mental malady, over which neither spring nor summer seemed likely to have a happy influence; and which daily grew more insupportable from the necessity of concealment. Money had never yet been, at any period of Sir Arthur's life, an object of consideration to him: too affluent at one time to want, and at another too moderate to spend it, he now first discovered its importance. For Montague, he was proud, delicate, nay, he would have been even profuse; and to be obliged to send him into the world with

the narrow stipend annexed to a commission, was a chagrin that would very much have assisted to hasten his kind friend out of it. Yet to raise a sum that should set him above this, was, in the state of Sir Arthur's health and fortune, a matter of difficulty. Delay followed delay, and spring was already far advanced before the business seemed likely to be completed. With spring, however, returned those genial breezes which communicate their vivifying power to the heart. "Our friend will live, my dear Clara," wrote Montague: "he has to-day been rolled out in his easy chair to enjoy the balm of the sunshine. How bright to me would have been the beam had my Clara partaken it! yet in seeing the returning glow that kindled on the cheek of Sir Arthur, I think I felt a pleasure hardly second to that with which I have beheld it mantle over her own. The purchase-money for my commission is now laid down.

I believe

I believe he has had some difficulties in raising it; but his attentive kindness has hitherto concealed them from me. Poverty, however, is not an evil confined to your lover, my dear Clara. From a mistake caused by negligence or haste, the agent whom Sir Arthur employs misdirected a letter, designed, doubtless, by its contents, for some unfortunate fellow like myself, and which fell into my hands. I felt a most disagreeable sensation as I returned it. It was civil, nevertheless: but still it was the language of refusal. 'Money was so scarce —his exigencies were so frequent; then he had friends who were so liberal—and a mother who could deny him nothing.'— Ah Clara! he is there more fortunate than myself, for I have no mother!"

The answer to this conveyed the first blow that had ever yet wounded the heart of Montague. Miss Rochford, still tender, still faithful, and only too timid, confessed

 that

that she had not courage to endure the censure or the raillery of her aunt; who, having noticed their correspondence, had very indignantly reprobated it; arraigned the conduct of Sir Arthur in permitting her to form an engagement so little likely to prove advantageous to either of the parties concerned, and absolutely forbade all future intercourse between them. Clara concluded with observing, that though neither her heart nor her judgement accorded with Lady Selina, who, she conceived, had a far less right to direct her conduct than Sir Arthur himself, she yet requested that the letters intended for her might be directed under cover to a third person, who was, in fact, no other than her own maid.

Not all the qualifying or gentle terms in which this information was conveyed could conceal from the jealous pride and penetration of Montague that Lady Selina had endeavoured

endeavoured to throw him at that haughty distance in the mind of Clara, at which his own revolted. Anger, disdain, bitterness of soul, at once seized upon him. The very letter Lady Selina had read was precisely that which avowed his poverty, his insignificance. Ah! what letter could he probably ever write that would *not* avow it? How afflicting is that moment when the illusions of early youth begin to evaporate! when the cares, the anxieties, from which many a weary head and affectionate heart have been cautiously shielding us, suddenly press near and heavily upon our own! Under the roof of Sir Arthur, cherished by his fortune, and sanctioned by his name, Montague had appropriated that rank in society to which the ingenuous and deserving mind believes it has a natural claim. What was his surprise to find that he had in fact none there! Excluded, as he was informed by Sir Arthur, through the

misfortunes

misfortunes of his family, from connexions and friends, whose ingratitude had stamped them as aliens, there were moments in which a fearful surmise presented itself, which he knew not in what manner either to answer or avow. Yet engaged as his father had been in great commercial speculations, it was possible that he had been worse than *unfortunate.* "Ah, if so," sighed the indignant young man, "grievous is the lot of that child whom his parents rob of the first and dearest claim of his birth—an untainted acceptation in society!"

The amended state of Sir Arthur's health was fully necessary to enable him to endure a stroke upon his nerves for which they were ill prepared. To part with Montague for the mere marches and counter-marches of a home and bloodless service was a sacrifice he had necessarily resolved upon; when he was suddenly shocked with the intelligence of

of an approaching war, which, as in its opening it threatened Gibraltar, had caused the regiment in which the young man was entered to be immediately draughted there. Glory, promotion, active life, and all the chimeras attendant on a bold and aspiring mind, at once sparkled before that of Montague; hard service, an obscure and stationary rank, possibly a premature fate, presented themselves to the more experienced judgement of the baronet. He had still enough of the soldier, however, in him, to know that no other arrangement could now be thought of, but that which circumstances prescribed: and he was somewhat comforted on being assured, by those who were more conversant than himself with the affairs of the world, that the movements on both sides rather announced a political manœuvre than any real danger. The painful separation was, therefore, at length accomplished; and Montague, having the satis-

faction

faction of leaving his friend's health re-established, found himself in London. It was there a separation awaited him—ah, how much more exquisitely painful! every step, as it brought him nearer to the spot where Miss Rochford resided, added to the throbbings of his heart. Announced as his approach had been, though but by a hasty letter, he formed wild expectations of hearing from, or even seeing her, he hardly knew where, or how: and when the first inquiry at the hotel where he alighted produced him neither answer, nor notice of any kind, all the furies of jealousy and resentment took possession of his soul. Miss Rochford, however, could not notice a letter which she had never received; and the information he collected at Lady Selina's door, though not calculated to sooth his impatience, quickly subdued his resentment: for he learnt that both she and Clara had been for more than ten days out of town on a visit; that their re-

turn

turn was uncertain, and that the servants left in the house had no commission to forward any letters: none, probably, were expected by one party, nor were the expectations or wishes of the other such as she dared openly avow.

Occupation, the most sovereign of all remedies for an unquiet mind, now fortunately intervened to spare that of Montague the daily painful expectations that would otherwise have preyed upon it; and the novelty of the scenes before him, together with the necessity for exertion, at once awakened his powers. Sir Arthur's tenderness had furnished him with letters of introduction to some of those who had formerly been his own intimates, and from whom, though long separated by time and circumstances, the baronet conceived he had a claim to attention. But summer was now fast approaching, and the town was thin: of the persons to whom

whom the letters were addressed, several were absent, and others dead. Among those to whom they were delivered, a great number had such short memories, that they could with difficulty recollect their old friend Sir Arthur; and others, on the contrary, such long ones, that they were not able to forget he had been disinherited. A few, indeed, did more credit both to him and to themselves; but as they were not men of brilliant abilities, and were far advanced in life, the civilities they proffered were consequently of a cold and phlegmatic kind. Montague, therefore, soon conceiving himself neglected, because he was not courted, marked them down in his imagination as superannuated and dull, and readily suffered them to escape from his memory. Such are the decisions of youth! He had in the event but too much reason to assure himself that the persons thus neglected were exactly those whose knowledge of characters and of life would,

would, probably, had their acquaintance been duly cherished, have spared him the most bitter and well-founded regret.

Money, the grand spring of action every where, Montague soon found to be parti cularly necessary in London: he therefore hastened to wait on Mr. Colvil, the gentleman through whose assistance Sir Arthur had raised it; and as he called at an hour when men of business are rarely from home, he was immediately admitted. Mr. Colvil was a middle-aged man, of a genteel appearance, whose services were extremely useful to a certain description of people, and whose connexions in the military line rendered his house, which was a very handsome one, particularly the resort of gentlemen in the army. Montague found him in conversation with a young man, who withdrew, on the entrance of a third person, to a window not far distant, against which he continued

to lean with that sort of serious and abstracted air which proved, that though his eyes were fixed on the passengers in the street, their sense was collected inward. As Sir Arthur's name had a better recommendation to Mr. Colvil than to some of those to whom it had been lately announced, he received Montague with extreme civility; apologised for not having called on him on his arrival in town; and, after a few inquiries and common-place compliments concerning his old friend the baronet, to whom he made no doubt Montague was nearly related, informed the latter, that though, not being aware of his visit, he was unprovided with the money, it should certainly be at his command, even, if necessary, in a very few hours.

"You will think of what *I* have been saying, Mr. Colvil," said the stranger, abruptly; and as if roused by the mention of

of money from a very uneasy contemplation.

"I really wish it was in my power, Sir, to think to any good purpose," answered Mr. Colvil, with a civil smile.

"Rather say, in your will," replied the other, relapsing into gloom. Montague fixed his eyes upon him, as he spoke, with a blended emotion of interest and curiosity, which he found it the less indelicate to indulge, as it by no means seemed to embarrass its object, who was perfectly engaged with his own contemplations. He appeared about six or seven and twenty, extremely handsome, and of an easy and graceful deportment, that announced him to be above the common rank. In his dress there was nothing remarkable: but he was very pale, and an air of languor and fatigue added to the expression of chagrin that marked his countenance.

"My

"My father," he continued in the same abrupt and impatient tone as before, "is, I have told you, still at Windsor;—my mother, on whom you know I could rely, is out of town, and the occasion is so pressing——"

At the mention of his mother, Montague, struck suddenly with the idea that this stranger was no other than the very person into the secret of whose distresses he had before inadvertently obtruded through the accident of the letter, and for whose disappointment he had then breathed a commiserating sigh, looked at him with redoubled interest.

"I am extremely sorry," returned Mr. Colvil, hesitating, as if somewhat embarrassed on finding himself between two parties for whom such opposite answers were intended, "quite concerned.—Had you allowed me any time—but, you see, my word

is

is pledged elsewhere, Sir: and against the evening, therefore, it is impossible—totally impossible, I assure you," repeated he emphatically.

Montague, from motives of delicacy, had risen to take his leave, when the impression of the last words struck upon his heart as if directed to himself; and the oblique reference to his own claims seemed to justify his interfering.

"If," said he, turning to Mr. Colvil, from an irresistible impulse of generosity, "if a short delay on my part will enable you, Sir, to accommodate this gentleman, I shall consider the trifling inconvenience as a matter of no consequence."

An electric stroke could hardly have produced a more sudden effect on both his hearers than did these few words. The

young stranger, indeed, lifted up his haughty eyes with something like disdain: as they glanced over the person of Montague, however, their expression totally changed. The latter was finely formed, had from nature an air of distinction, and, besides being strikingly handsome, had an intelligence of countenance, that at once denoted the character of his mind.

"I have not the honour of knowing *you*, Sir," said the stranger, in a tone that proved he thought *himself* known, "but I feel particularly obliged by your offer.—Colvil, introduce us to each other." The astonished Mr. Colvil complied: but his surprise was far inferior to that Montague felt, when he understood that this impoverished young man, whose pecuniary distresses he, in the plenitude of his wealth and power had condescended to relieve, was no less a person than the son of Colonel

Mordaunt:

Mordaunt: the very officer under whom he was to serve; whose fortune was even above his rank, and whose pleasure he had vainly waited for two whole hours that very morning at the war-office. Mordaunt, who, as his manner evinced, had not doubted his being known to the stranger who had thus volunteered so extraordinary a kindness, was, if not the most astonished, certainly the best pleased of the three, at the close of a conversation which secured him the command of a sum far exceeding any calculation that had been made by him who offered it. The circumstances of Mr. Mordaunt's situation, however, seemed to ensure his responsibility; and while he, in high good-humour, drove off in an open carriage with which his groom waited at the door, Montague, who declined the offer of being set down, walked thoughtfully home to his hotel; not quite convinced that his head could be acquitted of

folly upon the partial testimony of his heart.

"You have played a young man's trick my good Sir," said Mr. Colvil, by way of consoling him, as he took his leave; "but Charles Mordaunt is an honourable fine fellow, I assure you: if he is lucky, he will probably replace the sum soon; if otherwise, the trifling delay can be, as you observe, a matter of no consequence." This hint was not lost on the person to whom it was addressed; and it afforded him a melancholy conviction that whatever inconveniences might arise from the step he had just taken, Mr. Colvil would not be likely to prove himself a young man.

Beyond the calculation of, perhaps, any of the parties concerned, the gay equipage of Mr. Mordaunt set him down at Mon-

tague's door at no very late hour the next morning; when gracefully settling every obligation but that of kindness to his new acquaintance, he invited him, after many flattering tokens of regard, to dine with a party of his brother officers at an hotel in St. James's-street. An introduction like this was in itself distinction, and Montague immediately found it so. For what possible purpose Mr. Mordaunt could want so large a sum of money for so short a time, and why he should be communicative of his private distresses before a stranger, nevertheless considerably puzzled one so new to life as Montague: but he was not long in discovering that the young man whom he had obliged lived in too fashionable a circle to make any secret either of his pleasures or his necessities. The love of play, in all its various forms, was evidently a mania that reigned throughout the family of the Mordaunts; and though it was, perhaps, more

cautiously veiled, or spoken of with more reserve, where the Colonel was concerned, the pharo table and Mrs. Mordaunt were intimately blended in the ideas of all who approached her. Enabled (for she was the Colonel's second wife) by a splendid and independent fortune to supply both her own extravagance and that of her son-in-law, Mrs. Mordaunt had, indeed, so cherished a fatal propensity in the mind of the latter, as almost to expel from it every other pursuit of pleasure. As if the folly of half the night were insufficient, the whole of it was frequently spent with gay parties at his mother's villa, in the neighbourhood of Windsor, whence he sometimes returned with a high flow of spirits; at others raging with vexation, wan, languid, and exactly the being he had shown himself at Mr. Colvil's. Yet, this one vice excepted, Mordaunt wanted neither understanding, heart,

nor

nor spirit. His manners were highly ingratiating; he was much beloved by his brother officers; and the title of his friend, which, after a short acquaintance, he bestowed on Montague, gave the latter a consequence and a pleasure likely to prove but too dangerous.

Engrossed, as he could not fail to be, by a variety of concerns, Montague yet counted impatiently the days and hours of Miss Rochford's absence. The probability of leaving England without seeing her became a source of the most poignant anxiety. With the romance incidental to an impassioned mind, he began to impute to Lady Selina a thousand chimerical plans, as much beyond her capacity of inventing, as her power of executing: to assure himself that it was impossible so critical an absence could be the effect of chance; and to discover in that which a farther knowledge of

life would have shown him to be a very common proceeding, a deep-laid scheme against his happiness. Except in the winning of an odd trick, Lady Selina was, nevertheless, perfectly innocent of any scheme whatever. She had, indeed, wholly and positively disapproved the attachment of her niece; but she thought too little of the force of any attachment to believe it necessary she should do more than disapprove; especially a love affair, which it was so very obvious would never give her a title or a fortune. Lady Selina was, in fine, one of those insipid characters who, having neither a heart nor head, vitiate only by creating an atmosphere in which the vital principle that should cherish every faculty of either, is wholly wanting. As her income was narrow, and her expenses great, it was her established custom to burden her friends with her company, and disburden herself of her servants, during the

the summer months. Her stay was everywhere uncertain, as it was regulated by the civilities of her hostess: and her acquaintance were exactly of that dangerous class who loving the pleasures of the world sufficiently to sacrifice to them every thing but a certain degree of acceptation there, find in the world that with which it so frequently

> ——— "Its votaries rewards:
> "A youth of folly, and old age of cards!
> "Fair to no purpose, artful to no end;
> "Young without lovers, old without a friend,
> "A fop their passion, but their prize a sot;
> "Alive ridiculous, and dead forgot."

One of these poor prizes in the lottery of life Lady Selina had, indeed, drawn: who after having shown just spirit enough to squander a good fortune, judiciously took leave of society exactly at the period when it would otherwise have taken leave of him. But what was Lady Selina to Mon-

Montague? He thought not of, cared not for her, except as the relation of Clara: and amidst the various evils with which he bewildered and tortured his imagination, that which was by far the most obvious and dangerous, a frivolous connexion, was the last that occurred to him.

To Colonel Mordaunt, who had been almost constantly at Windsor, Montague had not yet had the opportunity of being presented; but the kindness of his son, and the flattering reception that kindness had secured him in the regiment, already prepared him to expect and to give far more than a common share of attention both to the commander and the duties of the service. Professional business at length, however, obliged the Colonel to quit his attendance on the higher powers, and be in town. Young Mordaunt, who was zealous to present his favourite to his father, volunteered

lunteered in his turn, and secured the latter a most gracious invitation to breakfast with the Colonel at a coffee-house, to which it was his custom to resort whenever the pressure of affairs, or the absence of his household, made it inconvenient to him to be at home. Punctuality, however, was not among the virtues of young Mordaunt: for, though he well remembered to bring the invitation, he totally forgot that he was a party concerned in it: and Montague, after vainly expecting him beyond the appointed hour, thought it more advisable to introduce himself, than to appear wanting in respect on an occasion where he could hardly show too much. His reception from Colonel Mordaunt at once convinced him that he had judged rightly. To a military air and a dignified countenance, Colonel Mordaunt united the polished manners of a court. He was much handsomer than his son, though far past the meridian of life. There

was a marked penetration in his eye; and his fine features, when composed, announced something of harshness, and even of austerity; but his smile was affability itself; and the flexible tones of his voice proved that he had equally studied to please and to command. Nothing, in fine, could more completely fill up Montague's idea of an officer and a gentleman than Colonel Mordaunt. If on one side the impression was thus favourable, it was obviously not less so on the other. To the Colonel, who was a strict disciplinarian, and valued himself on commanding, even in the ranks, some of the finest men in the service, the tall, graceful, and manly figure of Montague proved, as his son well knew it would do, an immediate recommendation: and had he wanted a contrast, a meagre and yellow ensign, who stood near, would have supplied one. The latter, however, was dismissed: and, from the manner of his dis-

mission,

mission, Montague felt that Colonel Mordaunt could certainly be proud. To the young man, however, he was, throughout the breakfast hour, courteous in the extreme. He even seemed desirous to form an estimate of his talents and his capacity: and, though a certain delicacy of mind withheld Montague from drawing conclusions too rashly in his own favour, he felt persuaded that the Colonel's observations were advantageous to him.

"My son," said the latter, towards the close of a long and desultory conversation, "has recommended you very warmly to me. I do not ask," he added, with a significant smile, "where, or how, your acquaintance commenced: Charles, however, in spite of his foibles, has good qualities, and, as you are a young soldier, you will do well, in the duties of your profession, to make him your model. Sir Arthur

Montague was in the service himself, I recollect, though we were not on the same duty.—Are you nearly related to him?"

"Very distantly, I believe," replied Montague, in a respectful tone; adding, after the pause and consideration of a moment, "I bear his name chiefly as a testimony of his kindness, and as one of three to which I have a claim: that of my family is Cavendish."

"Indeed!" said Colonel Mordaunt, with tokens of surprise.

"Personal misfortunes," added Montague, colouring and proudly casting down his eyes as he spoke, "induce my father, who is at present in India, to bury his own name in obscurity: it will probably never be resumed till he can give it that consideration in life to which he believes it entitled."

"I am

"I am then to have the honour of commanding—Mr. *Cavendish!*" said the Colonel, emphatically, and after a pause.—"Is Sir Arthur apprised of your intentions?"

"It was his judgement that determined me."

"Judiciously, no doubt," returned Colonel Mordaunt, after another thoughtful pause: then clearing his countenance, he added, "I think you cannot do better than retain his name; it is known in the military world, and will be a recommendation." The conversation afterwards relapsed into its former train; but it insensibly languished on the side of the Colonel, who at length rang the bell, and ordered that some persons waiting to speak with him on business should be admitted. Montague taking the hint, made his bows, and respectfully departed. But he departed not

as he had entered. A strange and petrifying damp had struck upon his heart, and extinguished all that ardour and self-possession with which he had met Colonel Mordaunt. Yet in the countenance or words of the latter there had been nothing decidedly to alarm or offend him.—The change, if any there was, had fallen in gradations so nice, that though the whole colour of the picture was different, he knew not how to define the alteration. A jealous pride bade him, indeed, trace it to the name of his father: a suspicious delicacy taught him to fear that Colonel Mordaunt might, in some transaction with that father, have been a sufferer. But so complicated was the feeling, so perplexed the recollection, that he could not at last ascertain whether it did not arise from a fastidious habit of mind, rather than a rational impression. The mortifying surmises that had before presented themselves, nevertheless

theless occurred afresh to his imagination; and he deeply regretted not having extorted from Sir Arthur a more exact detail of the misfortunes or indiscretion that had ruined Mr. Cavendish. Whatever migh be the propriety of his feelings, one determination, however, fully resulted from them: never again to mention his family name, till he was absolutely sure that he could confer honour upon, or receive honour from it.

Reflexions of this nature engrossed him some time, during a long and harassing walk into the city, where a succession of petty concerns detained him to a late hour. But chagrin and fatigue were at once put to flight, when, on his return, a letter, a long-expected letter, from Miss Rochford, was put into his hands. Eagerly opening it, he saw at once all that his heart desired—the pure and ingenuous language

language of unaltered tenderness. Both the manner and the style announced it to have been written in haste, and probably at the moment after his had been presented to her. She congratulated herself on the fortunate chance that had brought her, though for a short time, to London, when her aunt had torn her from it, without allowing her leisure to make those secret arrangements which would have ensured the receipt of his letters. She painted, in the most natural and tender terms, all the anxiety she had experienced during their separation, and that more poignant regret which his sudden and unexpected departure from England was calculated to inspire. Doubting, as she did, how far circumstances might allow either of them to command a single day, she hastened to say that it was her intention to see him at seven o'clock that very evening; an hour when the whole family were assembled at the dinner table; from which, under colour of

of indisposition, she meant to absent herself. "It was not thus by stealth," she tenderly added, "that you and I were accustomed to meet: but I am fettered by circumstances, and must bend to them."

The impatient lover hardly read the letter ere he looked at his watch. *Seven* o'clock! the hour was almost come, almost gone in his imagination, or would be, before he could reach his appointment: he was not long in doing so, however. As the number of the house was particularised in the date of the letter (for it was not that of Lady Selina), he had no difficulty in finding it, though the mortification of discovering that, late as he supposed himself, he was, in fact, too early. A very magnificent dining parlour was indeed lighted up; but as the curtains were not dropt, on account of the heat, and the lower shutters ill closed, it was easy to discern that the ser-

 vants

vants were still busy in preparation. Montague waited long enough to ascertain that a gay group of both sexes had been for some minutes seated round the table, when ringing the bell, Miss Rochford's maid, to whom he had been in the habit of inclosing his letters, immediately appeared, and conducted him up stairs. Every thing throughout the house strikingly announced splendour and profusion; and the noisy mirth that resounded from one part of it, formed a singular contrast to the profound stillness of the spacious apartments above. Miss Rochford was too much embarrassed by the mystery she had been obliged to observe, to receive him with an unmixed pleasure: but by stationing her maid in the anteroom, as if to guard against intrusion, she seemed willing to sanction, or at least to qualify to herself, the indecorum she felt guilty of. He had never seen her more lovely; yet was she rather paler than when

they parted; and an air of fashion, and even something of affectation, had a little changed the expression of her countenance and manner. Even the ingenuous sweetness of her language betrayed that alteration which the circle she lived in was exactly calculated to produce; and throughout the course of an interview so often anticipated, and fondly rested upon, as that which was to give the colour of happiness to many a long and painful day of separation, Montague thought he perceived but too clearly, that though the heart of Clara was still his, part, at least, of those simple and rational ideas, which, under the circumstances he stood in, could alone secure it from alienation, had already evaporated: the supposition was an almost insupportable wound to his own. Yet to whom could he apply for consolation? of what even could he complain? the poison, it was evident, existed in the very air she breathed, the society

she lived in: no virtue was yet wanting in her character: no affection was blighted in her bosom. They seemed, alas, only withering there!

Montague loved too passionately to venture the language of reproach; but a profound and exquisite presentiment of sorrow seized upon his heart. His conversation grew suddenly common, uninteresting; and an air of languor, almost approaching to despondency, diffused itself over his features. No longer able to say what he felt, he seemed unwilling to say any thing; when his attention was suddenly awakened by the name of Mordaunt. He had himself told Miss Rochford by letter that it was in Colonel Mordaunt's regiment he had entered; and he now, rather from the wish of replying, than for any gratification to his curiosity, inquired whether she was acquainted with him.

"Un-

"Undoubtedly I am," replied Clara; adding, with a tone of surprise, "do you not know that we are at this moment in his house?"

"Most assuredly I did not," returned Montague, while his heart sprang to his lips, and suddenly suffused his cheek with crimson: for it had not escaped him in the conversation of the morning, that, though the Colonel, at its commencement, had spoken largely of seeing him often, at parting, he had cautiously, and even decidedly, avoided repeating the invitation. Yet *his* was the very house into which, before evening closed, Montague had secretly entered like an intruder and a menial. The sense of humiliation attached to this idea lost nothing of its poignancy, when, by the ill fortune of staying with Miss Rochford, in spite of her repeated admonitions, just five minutes too long, he met the female party, from

from the dining parlour, on the stairs. His situation was much too embarrassing to admit of his distinguishing any one individually; but a slight and haughty bow, with an observing glance from the last, informed him that he past Mrs. Mordaunt. The recollections that had occurred while Clara was present were painful; but those that now necessarily obtruded were distracting. It was clearly at Mrs. Mordaunt's villa that she had hitherto resided with her aunt during their absence from town: and with Mrs. Mordaunt, by the approbation of Lady Selina, he found she was, for some time, likely to remain: he saw her, therefore, at once embosomed in an arrogant, profuse, and dissipated family; the manners of which, according to his own observation, and the report of one whose authority could not be doubted, since it was Charles Mordaunt, united every thing dangerous and alluring: he saw himself, meanwhile, obscure, impoverished,

poverished, and shut out from the circle in which she was invited to mingle. Nor did jealousy fail to take its turn in his mind, when he remembered the long and frequent visits of his friend to Windsor—remembered that Mordaunt might seize

"On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,"

while he to whom it had been pledged was distant, and perhaps almost forgotten. Of this paroxysm, however, he soon had leisure to see the folly; in proportion as more close observation convinced him, that the heart of a man who loves gaming is rarely vulnerable to any softer passion.

If the situation of Montague's mind was painful, that of Miss Rochford's was not to be envied. The fluttered letter she had written was in fact rather the consequence of embarrassment than even of those sentiments to which love had given birth. She

was

was passionately devoted to Mrs. Mordaunt; one among the few of her aunt's intimates whose manners and modes of living had something in them peculiarly attractive to a youthful mind: while the latter, having found in Miss Rochford an exquisite beauty, and a grace that adorned every extravagance of fashion, took pleasure in forming her on her own model. But Mrs. Mordaunt lived for the world, and in its gayest circles: so that Clara, who rather felt than acknowledged this, even to herself, was well aware that the avowal of an obscure and rustic attachment would degrade, if not render her ridiculous in the eyes of her friend. Yet loving Montague with ardor, she had not given him up, even apparently, without an effort; but it was the effort of a timid mind against a strong and decided one; and had consequently the effect that might be expected from it. Without courage to be wholly explicit upon a subject

subject which she more than half suspected Mrs. Mordaunt was *resolved* not to understand, she next directed her hopes to Colonel Mordaunt; and hinted that she should be extremely happy to see Mr. Montague, as being the relation of her guardian, during his stay in town. The Colonel coolly replied, "that it was not his custom to receive the subaltern officers at his house." So total an exclusion, though it grieved and astonished Clara, was yet capable of producing reflexions little favourable to her lover; and had given that slight and almost imperceptible tinge to her manners, which he had felt, without being able either to complain of, or describe; while sensible, as she was, that the mysterious mode of their meeting had been a resource, not a choice, and was in its nature a flattering proof of her tenderness, it had never occurred to her to doubt whether he knew Colonel Mordaunt's house, or to calculate the kind of feeling which might

might naturally follow such an introduction into it.

In supposing Mrs. Mordaunt was resolved not to understand her, Clara had penetrated into the truth. The former had nevertheless too much knowledge of life not to be aware, when she met Montague on the stairs, to whom his visit must have been directed: but she had address and presence of mind enough to veil this discovery from the female circle, by a cursory observation that he came on business to the Colonel. A glance over the features of the young man had shown her that he was handsome; but his long and fatiguing walk, his dress, which he had never changed since the morning, the chagrin that clouded his features, and the embarrassed air attendant on his situation, had robbed even grace itself of its charm; nor was it possible to have seen him to less advantage. Mrs. Mordaunt at once

decided

decided that he had no fashion—no manner—no importance. Whether he had virtues or claims she paused not to inquire. She had already formed her own hopes with regard to the future establishment of Clara: well assured, therefore, that nothing cherishes a first and girlish passion like habits of confidence, she resolved, without showing she suspected the sentiment, slowly and silently to extirpate it; and to widen that distance which both fortune and nature, she concluded, had placed between the lovers.

The hour that was to transport Montague to new scenes, and a new sphere of action, at length arrived. He embarked in the same vessel with young Mordaunt; silently followed by every gentler wish of Miss Rochford's heart, overwhelmed with the kindness, the benedictions, the prayers of the affectionate Sir Arthur. Ah! could his eye rest on the wide world of waters without recol-

recollecting that its billows rolled between him, and one, whose wishes more deep, more fervent than those of all beside, though blended with the winds, and dispersed in the immensity of space, yet found a path through both to hover over *his* head! It is, however, the peculiar disadvantage of certain societies to be bound too closely to each other, and, consequently, to give to either the good or bad habits that prevail in the body at large a treble power of acting over the individual. Soft and refined feelings were ill suited to the situation of a young man who was surrounded with the gay, the dissipated, and the uninformed: and Montague was more particularly exposed to danger, as the warmth of his character gave him a strong flow of animal spirits, and a talent for conversation always embellished them. The associates to whom his taste, however, chiefly directed him, were, happily, nether profligate nor corrupt; and even

even among the rest, some had good qualities, and some had understanding. But the majority of those around were a common class of characters, whose whole merit consisted in a due discharge of the business of the day, and who, neither desiring, nor deserving, any higher praise than that of being good soldiers, were nearly as mechanical in their ideas as in their military manœuvres. Of this praise, however, Montague soon acquired even more than his share. An excessive ardour in every pursuit, increased by the influence of a powerful and exquisitely susceptible pride, had been, indeed, at a very early period, the marking characteristic of his mind; and was likely to prove, throughout life, according as it was worthily or unworthily directed, his merit, his misfortune, or his scourge. The zeal with which he now attended both to the study and duties of his profession presently excited the astonishment of those who

were

were accustomed to consider every exertion as a matter of habit or necessity. By the more enlightened and active he was, however, soon distinguished as a young man of the most promising talents; and all agreed that the application of them would infallibly place him very high in the favour and opinion of Colonel Mordaunt. Charles Mordaunt even, whose partiality towards Montague was greatly increased by the discovery he daily made of his abilities, and the delight he took in his society, frequently rallied the latter on the distinction he would acquire over himself: and in the secret exultation which their united applause was calculated to inspire, the hours flew rapidly and lightly away.

Those motives which had induced the two nations to wear a hostile appearance, became at length sufficiently guessed at to persuade the chief military men on both

sides

sides that no actual service was likely to ensue. The troops, however, still kept strictly within garrison, and cherished that ardour and discipline by which, should occasion call them forth, they hoped to acquire superior reputation. Colonel Mordaunt, who had been too much in the circle of the court not to know, long before, all that was necessary or expected from him, had been hitherto engaged in England by a variety of circumstances that equally concerned him in his public and private capacity. His presence was at length hourly expected; and every officer was doubly ambitious to show, by his individual exertions, how solicitous he had been to keep up the honour of a corps of which they all knew their superior was so jealous. Among the hearts that most proudly looked forward to the event of the Colonel's arrival was that of Montague. He had felt himself rapidly rising in general estimation. Even those

who,

who, from envious motives, did not personally like, yet joined to applaud him; and he already anticipated, in imagination, the most exquisite of all pleasures; that of triumphing, by the mere force of merit, over the arrogance, or the accidental prejudice, of one, who, whatever might be his failings, he yet believed to possess judgement and military ardour enough to applaud desert.

From all these towering hopes, these high-raised expectations, he fell at once: a glance, a word of Colonel Mordaunt's annihilated them. "Every officer in my regiment, I presume, does his duty," said the Colonel, coldly turning his back on the parade both to Montague and his own son, as the latter, perceiving a marked neglect or inattention in his father, somewhat too officiously interfered. The speech, the manner, and the circumstances that accompanied or succeeded both, though not immediately ob-

vious

vious in their effect, were nevertheless decisive. All who hoped, all who feared, all who, without opinion or judgement of their own, follow that of the majority, gradually receded from the intimacy of a young man who, whatever his merit, was guilty of the crime of not pleasing. Such, however, were the habits of subordination, or the effects of consciousness, that what each man observed, no one commented upon, lest its operation upon his own conduct should become remarkable to his hearer. Montague, therefore, condemned without being arraigned, and shunned without having transgressed, had, in a very few weeks, but too much opportunity to observe that

> " Our genuine virtues do more sweet and clear
> " In fortune's graceful dress appear ;"

since the gallant spirit that had lately extorted praise, and the application that seemed to ensure esteem, were by turns sneered at

 as

as quixotism or pedantry, when the favouring smile was no longer likely to gild them.

The feelings of an enthusiastic and aspiring young man, who saw himself enthralled in a bondage it was useless to complain of, and hopeless soon to escape, may much more easily be imagined than described. Injury he might have atoned—error he might have corrected—nay, even prejudice, as man to man, he might have boldly stept forward to contradict or rectify: but his oppressor was, from the circumstances of situation, armed with weapons which he could encounter on no equal terms either of reason or of force: and though the iron daily eat into his very soul, he was obliged to smooth his brow, and form his lip into a smile in the presence of him who forged the chain.

A succession of petty mortifications and silent insults, though of all grievances, perhaps,

haps, most intolerably oppressive, nevertheless soon fades from the observation of the many. Yet among those to whom the conduct of the Colonel long continued a subject of secret surprise and indignation, was his own son. Despising a prejudice which he knew not how to account for, and had too much levity to investigate, Mordaunt attached himself to the person whom he conceived injured by it with a spirit that defied control. In the characters of the two young men, though there was much that was dissimilar, there were also many strong points of union. But the superiority had hitherto lain all on the side of Montague; who, with equal good qualities, had established them on a firmer basis than his friend. These were now in danger of being shaken through the medium of every thing most generous in either nature: and, by a cruel fatality, the injustice of the father seemed

likely to prove a far less misfortune than the kindness of the son.

Charles Mordaunt, though possessed of rectitude and feeling in his own person, yet associated, through the influence of a single vice, with the most dangerous and dissipated part of the military world; men who, secretly indulging an extravagant passion for play, staked, but too often, their fortunes, their characters, nay, eventually their very lives, on the hazard of a die. Montague had naturally little or no propensity to an error so fatal: but he had an ardent and impetuous character, eagerly disposed to grasp at every thing that bore but the semblance of a pursuit. While engaged in that professional one which he flattered himself was to render his career in life both prosperous and distinguished, he had resisted, with invincible fortitude, every allure-

allurement to dissipation; but his enthusiasm was now violently impelled from its natural bias: all, therefore, that was taken from the scale of honour, was gradually thrown into that of indiscretion, and it was in danger of sinking low indeed beneath the weight. Yet the rectitude of his mind rather yielding to circumstances than to temptation, failed not at intervals to assert itself: but its efforts were daily more feeble, as the effects of disappointment were more intense. No longer able to find pleasure in his duties—little cherished in general society, and, from the nature of his situation, devoid of amusement for solitude, he learnt by degrees to indulge that as a taste, which too soon, habitually, became an occupation; and, from the very difficulties in which it involved him, such is the weakness of our nature! blended so intimately with his feelings as almost to become a passion.

Sir Arthur's resources had been bounded; and it was those only that had bounded his liberality. When in the army himself, however, he had been in habits of extravagance, which, if not approved by his reason, were fully justified by his hopes; nor did the demands of his young friend, therefore, at first either startle or alarm him. But unfortunately it was not always that Montague could prevail on himself to make his exigencies known to one whose very kindness was a reproach. Without the same resources as young Mordaunt, he consequently became plunged in far greater embarrassments: yet was it those very resources that threatened finally to undermine the principles and the prudence of both.

When the Colonel took his station at Gibraltar, Mrs. Mordaunt had accompanied him thither. A very delicate and uncertain state of health, impaired daily by the dissi-

pation

pation in which she had lived, though it united with pride to seclude her from general society, yet withdrew her not from the select one she still affected to hold. Montague, to whom her name announced mortification, and who only rejoiced at her absence from England as it released Miss Rochford from her influence, had never desired to mingle in these parties; the less, as he had now reason to fear that her report of him, even if just, might not gratify the heart of Clara, and, through the means of the latter, might call forth the disapprobation of Sir Arthur. Young Mordaunt, however, who, though he possessed very small influence with his father, had yet a most unbounded one over his mother, frequently painted her in colours so alluring, that his friend felt disposed to recede from a prejudice hastily taken up. As all prospect of war had ceased soon after the arrival of the Colonel, several families, whose

relations

relations were in garrison, had quitted Gibraltar to reside in the town of St. Roque. The fine ruins scattered near, and the romantic beauty of the spot, which was situated upon a full and winding river, afforded a more healthy and pleasant retreat than could be found within the narrow limits of the walls. The house in which Mrs. Mordaunt resided, embellished by her taste and habits of living, soon became the central point of extravagance and folly. The species of amusement to which she was so passionately devoted, she there indulged at full, within the circle of her family and guests: and, far from correcting in her son-in-law habits her own example had either implanted or justified, she furnished him liberally with pecuniary assistance whenever his father was inflexible: nor was it seldom that the money thus lavished was, in turn, fatally applied by him to foster the indiscretion, or, as circum-

stances

stances demanded, to redeem the honour of his friend.

The deep sense of injustice which ever indignantly preyed upon the mind of Montague, irritated by temporary provocations, sometimes urged him, against his better judgement, to show Colonel Mordaunt a personal and haughty defiance. Among the temptations to this which he had hitherto resisted, was that inadvertently held out by young Mordaunt himself; who, without weighing the delicacies of situation, or the possible ill consequence to all parties, had frequently offered to present his friend to his mother. The indifference, not to say disgust, that subsisted between her and her husband, as well as the bold independence with which she asserted her own rights and modes of living, Montague had had sufficient opportunity indirectly to understand; and he sometimes figured to himself a sort of

of indignant gratification in the idea of mingling, without the invitation or concurrence of the man who oppressed him, in a circle where he well knew many, who were only his equals, had been received with kindness, and distinguished by intimacy.

To this rash project occasion was at length favourable: young Mordaunt had been for some days slightly indisposed, during which time he had resided at St. Roque; and the frequent messages he had sent from thence sufficiently authorised the meditated visit. The weather was extremely sultry; and Montague, who, after the professional duties of the morning, and a long walk, had no great inclination to stand in the sun in the garden, where he found his friend talking upon business with a soldier, passed on, at the invitation of the former, into the house. It was a low, though spacious, building, latticed after the Spanish fashion, and

and commanding a sweep of the river exactly at that point where it was most beautifully wooded. The entrance was through a vestibule constructed upon a Moorish pavement, curiously wrought, and filled with orange-trees in flower, the exquisite odour of which diffused itself deliciously around. The hall opened to a circular pavilion, elegantly fitted up with cushions and sofa seats, and where both light and heat were subdued by shades. On one side stood an ornamented work-table, whence somebody appeared lately to have risen; on the other a desk of the same kind, at which a young woman was seated. Montague, who had been desired to enter, and consequently had not apprehended that he should be guilty of any intrusion, stopped, and, slightly apologising, would have retreated. A civil acknowledgement, however, negatived the motion: and, as the room was singular, and embellished with great taste, he continued

to

to stand and look around him. Among the ornaments that chiefly engrossed his attention, the living one was not the last. She had resumed her occupation, which was writing music: and, the distance of her manner, together with the simplicity of her dress, which seemed to owe all its grace to the fair form of the wearer, left him at a loss to decide whether she was guest, visitor, or attendant on Mrs. Mordaunt. Whatever might be her rank, he thought he had rarely seen a face, the features of which were finished with such exquisite regularity. The beauty of her lip, which, by an almost imperceptible movement, seemed from time to time to form, in imagination, the notes marked by her fingers, particularly captivated him; and even a soft and sleepy air which her long dark lashes, as they were cast down, gave to her countenance, added to it a charm totally distinct from that of any other woman. While he meditated

meditated how to break the silence, it was broken by young Mordaunt; who, slightly kissing the fair hand of the stranger as he entered, with a kind inquiry after her health, requested permission to introduce Mr. Montague; announcing her at the same time to the latter as Mrs. Mordaunt.

Invariably accustomed as Montague had been to annex the ideas of arrogance and affectation to that name, it was with some difficulty that he concealed his surprise; nor was it lessened by the soft and easy affability with which she saluted him. In the beauty of her person, however, and the polish of her manners, he became immediately and deeply sensible of that charm which had ensured the devotion of all who approached her: yet her spirits or her health seemed delicate, for she spoke little; only at intervals raising her eyes from her employment, and rather taking through them

her

her part in the conversation; while Montague silently wondered how any face could seem perfect in which those beautiful eyes were veiled, and where his had been when he met her on the stairs at her own house: forgetful that such was then the embarrassment of his situation, that Helen herself might probably have passed him without his distinguishing a single feature of her countenance.

The dinner, to which he was invited to stay, was very elegantly served, though the guests were few; and the romantic beauty of the spot, together with the conversation of Mrs. Mordaunt, which, by an effort that seemed to exhaust her spirits, though not her understanding, was sprightly and captivating, gave to common topics and characters a singular charm. Clearer daylight, more open dress, and a nearer examination, nevertheless discovered to Montague that the form he had admired, however

ever lovely, was not altogether so perfect as he had at first believed it to be. Mrs. Mordaunt was past the bloom of life; and her complexion, though delicate, evidently owed much to art: yet was she so regularly and touchingly handsome, that neither the heart nor the eye could willingly acknowledge that it wanted any charm she did not possess. As evening began to close, the parties withdrew to the pavilion, the air of which was now embalmed with the scent of the orange flowers, and where Mrs. Mordaunt's harp was placed. It was then that she knew herself to be wholly irresistible. The exquisite line of beauty preserved in her features; her form, over which every garment was drapery, and of which every motion was grace; her fine eyes thrown forward to heaven, as if music were rather inspiration than science; with the corresponding position of her white arms, seen through the chords of her harp; while her lips, half open,

open, emitted the most languishing sounds; all united to form an image of celestial harmony and sweetness.

But this angel of the moment sank almost as suddenly from her visionary excellence. Anxiety, anger, spleen, every corrosive passion attendant on one cherished and pernicious vice, in the course of a very few hours disfigured her features. Charles Mordaunt, in whom, as well as in herself, an inveterate habit so superceded every recollection, that he neither felt nor weighed the losses of his friend, continued to urge the fortunes of both to a deep and ruinous excess: and when, after a chaos of hope, fear, and disappointment, Montague quitted the spot, it was with a gloomy presentiment that if his prosperity or peace were dear to him, he ought never to visit it again. But he had at length touched the fated circle; he was within the spell of the enchantress;

and every better resolution melted before it. Mrs. Mordaunt, independent of beauty, possessed manner, taste, and cultivation, that powerfully captivated all who had either: Montague, therefore, found himself as ill able to resist the pleasure of her society, as the influence of her example: but it was a pleasure purchased with destruction. Accidental gains and accumulated losses soon inspired that desperate boldness which left him little more to lose but honour. He lost to those who were not enriched by his ruin, not happier for his misery: to one who, while plunging him in an abyss whence no time probably could rescue him, only satisfied the importunate demands of a vacant mind, of an extravagant and ill-directed sensibility. Such was Mrs. Mordaunt. Money she despised: cruelty she abhorred: but she had prescribed to herself no duty, no tie, no rule in life; and thus wanting all that

should have filled up hers, became a blooming and pestilential poison in society.

Something of that lovely and perfect creature she ought to have been, was, nevertheless, by starts, still discernible. Depression, sadness even, a wild and wandering sensibility, would at times announce that her heart wanted a resting-place: that, had she been capable of regulating that heart, it might well have commanded the feelings of every one around. It was then that her mind appeared not to have "lost all its original brightness," but diffused somewhat so perfect and so dazzling over her exterior, that she seemed hardly

> "Less than arch-angel ruin'd, and th' excess
> "Of glory obscured."

These were, however, momentary starts; illusive images of a perfection at which she

aimed

aimed not: her spirits were often unequal from the delicate state of her health; and it was obvious, even to a common observer, that her health as frequently suffered from the fluctuation of her spirits.

The indiscretion of a few months sometimes forms the history of a life. Most truly so: for its consequences too often dye the colour of that life; nor does any vice more effectually do it than that which Montague now pursued. From the mind of the ill-fated young man those finer particles, which once constituted its essence and its charm, were gradually mouldering away. Extravagance, poverty, remorse, all appearing to attach themselves to the name of Mordaunt, by turns combined, through the medium of allurement or persecution, to undo him. His temper became harassed; his faculties bewildered: even the letters of Miss Rochford, as if she had been endued

with supernatural intelligence, communicated an alarm and depression which now seemed to incorporate with every thing that surrounded him: while those of Sir Arthur, calling back the vanished images of honour, emulation, happiness, and love, only deepened that heavy and inconceivable gloom with which his recollection was so often clouded. Could he, without a shame that covered his cheek with blushes, avow, even to himself, that those letters were rendered chiefly acceptable by the remittances they contained? Abhorring the sordid idea, he a thousand times swore to renounce the vice that could so debase him. Remonstrances, too, now frequently accompanied the letters. —Ah! when the kind, the liberal, the indulgent Sir Arthur remonstrated, with what pangs ought not that heart to be wrung that gave him the occasion! Yet still the occasion presented itself; and still in Mrs. Mordaunt's society, attracted by that peculiar

charm, that powerful interest she was so calculated to excite, Montague ever sought either to sooth, or to bury his cares.—The distant prospect thus clouded, the near one was blacker still. To his professional duties he was but too sensible that he had been lately worse than indifferent—neglectful: yet the eyes of Colonel Mordaunt, like those of a secret inquisitor, a malignant genius, ever silently upon him, watched his conduct, scrutinised his thoughts, and seemed only to wait some gloomy and mysterious moment on which to decide his fate.

"It was dark December—wind and rain." Mrs. Mordaunt had been for some days confined to her apartment by indisposition, and the two young men were returning one evening, arm in arm, from St. Roque to the town, when they suddenly encountered the Colonel. As they were both wrapt in military

litary cloaks, he challenged without knowing them; but, on recognising his son, ordered him, somewhat harshly, to hasten onwards. Then turning abruptly to Montague, he haughtily, and even insolently, demanded, "what carried *him* so often to St. Roque?"—It was one of those luckless points of time when the mind of the latter was wrought up by internal chagrin, and what he at least conceived to be accumulated provocations, to a pitch of irritability that shook his better reason, and thus roused, at once defied it. His answer was more than abrupt—it was disrespectful. Affronted, both as an officer and a gentleman, the astonished Colonel replied in terms little suited to either character; and, in the fever of the moment, Montague rashly extended his arm to strike him.

"Are you mad?" said young Mordaunt, seizing hold of it. The blow fell short; but

but the offence was given—the indignity was irremediable.

"You will take charge of that young man to his quarters," said Colonel Mordaunt to his son, and coölly walked forwards. On arriving there, Montague was, as he expected, immediately put under arrest.

Abandoned to solitude and silence, he might now, had the tumult of his blood permitted, have found ample leisure to review the past: but it was yet only a confused mass of which he had no power to distinguish the features. While his head was beating, and his heart bursting with indignation, a packet of letters was delivered him from England. Two dear and well-known hands at once presented themselves to his eyes: he trembled at sight of the third—it was his father's. A sentiment

of

of reverence, a tender consciousness that he neither deserved nor could at that moment endure parental fondness, at once overcame him, and he put the letter aside. Clara too!—No!—He could better bear Sir Arthur's; the language of the kind-hearted Sir Arthur, touching not so intimately the nicer springs of his soul, would probably relieve, console him. Alas! Montague knew not yet the bitterness of that pang which attends receiving unmerited kindness: a pang perhaps of all others *most* bitter, since it falls upon us with its whole weight, only while we are alike new to error and to suffering.

Sir Arthur's letter was frank and affectionate, like his character. It breathed no reproach; but the subject matter was reproach enough. He was in London:—he had exerted himself, he assured Montague, to the utmost, to obtain the money requested of him, "but he was not yet *so fortunate* as

to

to be able to remit it. That no want of œconomy on his own part, however, might interfere to prevent this, he was, at the moment of writing, in lodgings rather straitened and inconvenient, his infirmities considered.—Finally, that he every day hoped for the return of Mr. Cavendish, whose deep and proud sense of honour would, beyond doubt, rather induce him to expose himself to difficulties than suffer his son to encounter any."—There was something in the simple detail that Montague found it impossible to go through with. Sullenly, therefore, repelling the blush from his cheek, and the suffusion from his eyes, he broke the seal of Miss Rochford's letter.—It was calculated to add an ominous gloom to the moment. Coldness, distrust, the language of a wounded heart, breathed in every line. "If circumstances," said she, towards the conclusion, "should finally divide us, remember, at least, that they have been of

your

your creating. To dwell on the painful surmises that have embittered my hours would be vain: those of Sir Arthur are happily not yet reduced to certainty; though the vague and broken language of your letters has not escaped *his* attention:—How then should it mine? Alas! in Mrs. Mordaunt's details——" At the name of Mordaunt, Montague crushed the paper in his hand, in bitter and resentful silence.

Every nerve shook as he opened the third letter; a sort of fate seemed attached to it, over which his mind already mysteriously and vaguely brooded. It was long, impassioned, and written, it appeared, on the very day when his own, the most interesting one he had ever addressed to his father, had been received by him. "Sir Arthur's caution, my dear William," said the latter, "has kept from you more of my concerns than at your time of life, and possessed of principles

principles such as my heart ascribes to you, I should have deemed it necessary, or even wise, to suppress. But the period is nearly arrived when all secrecy will be at an end. The vessel in which I am preparing to embark with Lord Montresor now lies in the river. It is hardly possible to imagine the emotion and interest with which I look at it, or the various ideas that pass through my mind in long succession, when I consider whither it is to bear me. I read your letter with a tumultuous pleasure, as if it annihilated the distance between us, and I already seem to clasp to my bosom a son whom my proud heart will fondly beat, even in its proudest moments, to acknowledge. He shall not long *demand his happiness at my hands;* I will myself bestow on him that precious gift he so ardently desires, and in the hope of which he is, I doubt not, realising every exalted and noble idea which he has with so much energy described. Ah, William,

William, let me not find this promise an illusion!—let me indeed embrace one worthy of my long-cherished love, my high-raised expectations! Rather may the grave eternally divide us than allow me to survive the final disappointment of my hopes! for too surely, if my son prove not honourable, I both must and will *renounce him*."

"No, my father! it is he who must renounce you," said Montague, as laying the letter on the table he took down his pistols, and, with much apparent coolness, loaded them. Endued with a high-toned sensibility, and an extravagant pride; ascribing to his actions a criminality beyond that which a sober review of the various follies of life would have taught him to assign them; involved in poverty; harassed with debts of honour; subject, through his own indiscretion, to martial law, and in the toils of an enemy who could enforce its utmost rigour; Montague,

tague, in the temporary phrensy of his mind, believed that he had nothing to do but to die. Well he remembered the circumstances under which he had written to his father, and the terms of the letter. Where were now those high-sounding principles which in the presumption of youth he had dared to assure himself would regulate his conduct? Of what nature would be that justice he then so arrogantly claimed? This son, who "pledged himself never to let his father regret that he had given his life a charm, nor to blush if he gave it a distinction," had been, at his first outset in it, the slave of his passions, and the victim of his pride.—The reflexion was too bitter—the occasion that presented it, too critical. After a short consideration, therefore, he took pen, ink, and paper, and laying the letters before him, began to answer them separately. The task, however, was more than either his head or his heart was then equal to; yet he felt that

to

to live a little beyond the narrow period of existence he had assigned to himself; to be remembered when he had "past that bourne from which no traveller returns" by a few tender and affectionate beings; to render the tears they would shed less bitter, and the recollection of his follies less odious, would be an extenuation of them in his own eyes. Morning, however, surprised him ere the task was finished, and it had scarce dawned before a hasty footstep at the door warned him of some intrusion. Hardly had he time to throw his papers over the pistols, when Charles Mordaunt entered. The wan and dishevelled appearance of Montague sufficiently indicated how he had passed the night. Mordaunt drew a chair, and aware that he might offend the pride, if he attempted to sooth the feelings of his friend, began to talk in a strain that was neither gay nor grave. Montague heard without attending to him, till he mentioned with

anxiety

anxiety that his mother was much worse. "Something," said he, "disturbed her, I am told, extremely last night.—I cannot think what devil possessed us all—and my father in particular," added he, as if willing to introduce the name without exclusively referring to the circumstances uppermost in the minds of both.—Montague made no immediate answer.

"Do you fight duels with your own shadow?" continued Mordaunt, pointing to the pistols, which, by a slight motion communicated to the table, were become visible.

"They were here by accident," replied Montague, sullenly, as he rose to put them aside.—Mordaunt examined one.

"And *loaded* too by accident! Come, come, my dear friend! I am not to learn to

what

what excesses disappointment and chagrin may lead a man. Yet, *prudentially* speaking, suicide is, I believe, one of those crimes a person rarely resolves on till he has touched some crisis when common sense, had he the use of it, would tell him that his fate must mend of itself. You, at any rate, have debts, and cannot honourably go out of the world without discharging them. I do not mean by *that* argument, however, to detain you: so far otherwise," he added, taking out his pocket-book with bills in it, "that I am going to give you the opportunity of deciding for yourself.—Our acquaintance," he continued, more seriously, on seeing the repulsive motion of his friend, "began with a pecuniary kindness on your part: are you resolved to end the one, at the moment I would cancel the other?"

"You are talking at random."

"I hope

"I hope I am.—This, however, is not the chief purport of my visit. I saw my father late last night, and am entrusted with a message from him to you. Do not mistake me," he added, with a seriousness that almost amounted to solemnity, as he perceived by the rising colour and animated eyes of his friend that he had taken up a very erroneous idea. "At your time of life, or at mine, my dear Montague, the summary proceeding which I see occurs to you would probably settle all differences. But Colonel Mordaunt, believe me, stands not in the predicament, either as an officer or a man, that should render it necessary for him to prove a courage long since fully established.—I am commissioned to say that he means to see you this morning. Weigh well the manner in which you will receive him. Aware, as on reflexion you are, or ought to be, of your relative duties and situations, it becomes you at least to call up

that sobriety of mind which shall acquit you—to *yourself*."

The fine countenance of Mordaunt was lighted up, as he spoke, to a dignity which Montague had never before seen it express. But the occasion was not that on which the cooler faculties of his own mind were yet capable of exerting themselves. The mention of the Colonel's visit had again awakened a crowd of rebellious and indignant feelings; and he proudly assured his heart nothing should escape his lips that could look like an apology to a man he despised. By that singular self-command, however, of which a high-wrought spirit is capable, he smoothed his brow, ordered the table to be cleared, and, perceiving that his friend did not intend to quit the room, called for coffee. It was not late when Colonel Mordaunt was announced; and Montague, who in cold silence prepared to receive him, experienced at

at the first salute that internal surprise and revolution which seizes upon the mind, when we find we have, by a violent exertion, called up its powers to combat that which no longer appears hostile. Colonel Mordaunt entered with a singular grace and self-possession that ever attended him in his happier hours: avoiding the smallest tincture of arrogance in his manner, he motioned to his son and Montague to be seated; and, pausing for a short time before he spoke, as if fully to consider the subject, at length, with a calm and collected air, addressed himself to the latter. An hour before it would have been impossible to have persuaded the young man that any thing could come from Colonel Mordaunt's lips which he could have listened to with tranquillity, or assented to with truth: but the latter, well apprised of his own rights in life, of the claims of his situation, of the influence of his years, and of that superiority

which a calm and steady tone of mind ever possesses over a wild and extravagant one, now spoke a language that was totally unexpected: previously challenging, with a boldness that seemed to denote the justice of the appeal, the sober judgement of his hearer, as an auxiliary in the cause against him.

Without condescending to dwell upon the indignity offered to himself, or its ill consequences professionally, Colonel Mordaunt took a review of the conduct of him who offered it, upon the great basis of general good order and morality. He represented, in forcible language, the degradation to which a man of honour is subject in his *own* eyes, when, forgetting what is due to himself, he subverts the regulations of society at large, and more especially of that particular one which he is pledged to support. He even touched, with some sensibility, upon the folly of blighting, at an early

ly period of life, those prospects and that estimation which give life all its zest to the possessor, and endear it to those to whom *he* is dear. A rational father, in short, speaking to his son, would have spoken nearly in the same tone as Colonel Mordaunt did; and so well did he know how to address himself to the feelings of an ingenuous and too susceptible young man, by keeping in the background, with masterly judgement, all that could irritate them, and displaying with eloquence the mischiefs they produced, that, by an enchantment Montague hardly knew how to account for, the whole weight of error seemed suddenly transferred to himself.

"Having thought it necessary to say thus much," continued the Colonel, who attentively read in his countenance all the transitions of his mind, "I have but little more to add. The nature of your trespass," pursued he, while his voice was sensibly changed

changed and his colour heightened, "is known only to the three present. On my own part I demand simply the apology due to a gentleman.—It will be proper, however, for every reason, that you should enter into another regiment: you have, therefore, my leave of absence. Go to England: you will there find no difficulty in exchanging your commission. I believe," continued he, after a moment's pause, "that if you are disposed for a remote station, I could point out to you a very advantageous one:—but on that my son and you must confer."—As if he feared he had conceded too greatly, the Colonel stopped and fixed his eyes earnestly on Montague. But it was far otherwise: had he conceded less he had probably gained nothing. A generous heart will always give beyond what is demanded of it; and that of the young man, incapable of a medium, now at once dictated an apology the more ample because unpre-

unpremeditated, and which sprang spontaneously to his lips, before either his pride or his judgement could be called in as counsellors.

"How arrogant, how illiberal, how unjust have I been!" said he to Charles Mordaunt, when the Colonel was gone. "How has my narrow-minded jealousy misconstrued the words and looks of your father at moments when his penetrating mind was doubtless diving into my character, and discovering all its latent faults!"

"My father," said Mordaunt thoughtfully, and as if he felt less struck with the candour and generosity of the former than his friend had been, "piques himself upon knowledge of the world. It may possibly be sometimes a useful science; yet, on the whole, it is but a despicable one; and often produces in the hearts, where it is too minutely

nutely cultivated, as many faults as it discovers in those around.—What circumstance, pray, first gave you reason to imagine that he was prejudiced against you?"

"A mere trifle;—it was the mention of my father that awakened my observation. From the moment the name of Cavendish reached Colonel Mordaunt, I suspected myself to be odious to him."

"*Cavendish!*" repeated his friend, starting and changing colour, "What Cavendish?—Is your father alive?—Where is he?"

"He has been almost fourteen years in India, with Lord Montresor."

"And can you possibly be ignorant that Mrs. Mordaunt is the *divorced* wife of Mr. Cavendish?"

In

In those few words, how much was comprised! An arrow through the heart of Montague could hardly have inflicted a pang more acute: while a crowd of tumultuous recollections rushing to his brain, at once confirmed the truth thus strangely developed. *The divorced wife of Mr. Cavendish!* Gracious God! this then was the secret calamity, the long-hidden sorrow that silently consumed his father's heart: Mrs. Mordaunt was the fair creature so early lost to her son, and found again only to wreck him: the charmer of the world, whose accomplishments had dazzled all eyes in it, while the simple and domestic Lady Montague was fulfilling those duties which she had deserted! There was something too bitter, too afflicting, in the long train of ideas that rapidly succeeded each other. It was then his own mother who had shed poison over his nights, and poverty over his days.—His mother, who, carelessly scatter-

ing

ing the seeds of folly and corruption, had inadvertently nourished them in *his* bosom. It was she who had armed the hand of a military despot against him; who had even armed his own! In alienating from him the first dues of nature, she seemed to have given him a cruel promise of the future. All hearts, through her influence, had combined to grieve or to oppress him; and even the tender, the ingenuous Clara, had become less ingenuous, less tender, from the alluring power of one worldly and dissipated woman!—Nor let the dissipated and worldly woman who has escaped the misery of destroying her own son too rashly exult. Mothers more worthy than herself daily weep over those of either sex her attraction has led to vice, or her example to folly.

All that had hitherto been inexplicable in the conduct of Colonel Mordaunt was now

clear

clear as open day-light. Even that which had most worn the semblance of moderation and virtue ceased to be such, when it became obvious to recollection that no public inquiry could have been instituted into the conduct of Montague, without necessarily bringing forward, even as a common theme, such particulars of his birth and family as must not only have reached the ears of his mother, but have exposed the Colonel to all the odium of being a persecutor; since, by mentioning the name of Cavendish, the young man had himself, at that very first interview, discovered at once the important secret which a moment's observation convinced his hearer was unknown even to him who betrayed it.

Mrs. Mordaunt, a co-heiress, affluent at the period that Cavendish was ruined, and she herself divorced, became considerably more affluent by the death of those who

would have shared her wealth. She had carried to Colonel Mordaunt a splendid fortune, of which the disposal was vested in herself. Could he with unconcern see her daily on the brink of discovering a son whose personal graces and good qualities were so calculated to endear him? She too, who having no children by her second husband, so passionately longed, so ardently sighed, to see that very one who daily hovered round her without her knowing him! It was against this the unhappy Cavendish carefully guarded. Leaving her to carry into that world she loved, a then unbroken beauty, unwearying spirits, the pride of triumph, the rage of conquest, he had only been solicitous to preserve from her snare, during his own absence, a son whom he well knew she would purchase at any price. All the fears of a proud and anxious father had been sufficiently alarmed by the attempt made to carry off the child, even in infancy.

infancy. The seclusion with Sir Arthur, whose name had been a profound secret to all around at the time he took the boy away, Mr. Cavendish had imagined was sufficient to guard him from his mother; and that mother herself had been so effectually deceived, as always to suppose that the infant embarked with his father for India. Time elapsed before Mrs. Mordaunt recovered, by her second marriage, a part of the acceptation in society she had forfeited: but the period was spent in a foreign country with a seducer who was never able to give her the sanction of his name, as he was already married; and it was many years after her return to England that ill-fortune united with the ill-conduct of her son to embosom him in that very circle where the story was never likely to reach his ears. It had reached them now:—ah, it reached his heart! as young Mordaunt and he, by turns ashamed, bewildered, and confounded, related

lated to each other all that was yet new to either, of events in which both were so deeply interested. The Colonel had known his son too well to confide to him the secret which a thousand circumstances might have led him to betray. But while to the levity and indiscretion of youth Charles Mordaunt added a generosity and pride that his father could not trust, he added also a penetration that father could not escape. A behaviour in the latter towards Montague at once so rash and so cautious—a moderation so excessive—a pardon so indulgent—had all appeared in the eyes of the son, circumstances equally new and extraordinary; and while pausing over that which had already surprised him, he was yet more surprised at the singular proposal of removing the young man still further from England.—Such is, however, the dangerous nature of duplicity, and its tendency to overshoot itself, that the very circumstance which duped one mind

mind enlightened the other; and where the warm and agitated heart of Montague believed it ought to acknowledge a kindness, the more cool and collected judgement of Mordaunt discerned the possibility of a snare.

It seemed to be the singular fate of the former, however, to endure within the course of a very few hours every revolution of which the human mind is capable. The tide of indignant shame which flowed through his heart had hardly yet receded, when that of nature, breaking down every barrier, impetuously rushed in, as he learned that through the heart of his unfortunate mother it had indeed rushed with a vehemence that threatened rapidly to expel the vital principle. Mrs. Mordaunt had received long and explanatory letters from England by the same vessel which brought those to her son; and, by a mysterious ordination, the

the very hour when the paroxysm of contending passions had urged him to lift his hand against his own existence, was exactly that when she discovered where and how he existed at all. It was the tender and confidential communication of Miss Rochford that plunged a dagger in the bosom of her friend: nor did the former even know the pang she inflicted; for Mrs. Mordaunt's story was no new tale of slander; and in the circle of Lady Selina her affluence and fashion rendered her too acceptable to induce them to revive it. The innocent Clara, therefore, had heard incessantly of her beauty, her talents, her fortune, without ever being warned by the gray-haired votaries of the world of that speck which dimmed them all.

In the habits of correspondence, Miss Rochford had not been able to forbear some inquiries concerning Montague that spoke

spoke her attachment to him to be more serious than Mrs. Mordaunt had suspected it to be. The accounts of the latter were, as he too well guessed, not favourable either to his morals or his conduct. Adhering to a plan which she had not only formed, but in some instances acted upon, Mrs. Mordaunt, in her turn, became more explicit; and represented to her young friend the superior advantages she would derive from a union with Charles Mordaunt. But Clara loved—tenderly, truly loved; and though she conceived resentment enough against Montague to write coldly to *him*, the same sentiment no longer actuated her when writing to her friend. Taking up, therefore, at full, the history of her engagement, she at length recited with frankness and ardour all its attendant circumstances. What a picture to present to the recollection of Mrs. Mordaunt! To read again, and again, the long-forgotten name of *Cavendish*. To hear

 described,

described, in the tender language of Clara, that untold, but overwhelming calamity, which had "fractured the heart of the father, and blighted the fortune of the son." To reflect that she had been lavishing that wealth they both, it was plain, alternately had wanted: that she had been cherishing a vice which had still more impoverished her only child, and unconsciously striving, by every allurement, to expel him from the heart in which he had garnered up his own:—to add to this the cruel possibility that, in making herself known to him, she might incur indignity and scorn, were all circumstances that, in the feverish state of her blood, were calculated to destroy her. While yet plunged in a chaos of contending passions, the accidental tale of a domestic informed her, with many exaggerated particulars, that Montague lay under arrest by the order of Colonel Mordaunt. The last blow fell with a force too sudden and accumulated.

Long

Long habituated to the indulgence of every extravagant feeling—already a prey to the irritability of sickness, and the tædium of life, hers at once became odious: the fever of her spirits mounted to her brain; and while Colonel Mordaunt was profoundly scheming, and the two young men as anxiously deliberating, an unexpected occurrence thus exposed to her whole family, and through them to the world at large, that secret which four-and-twenty hours before had been unknown even to the parties most deeply interested in it.

But what was the world to Mrs. Mordaunt! Already it faded from her eyes—Its visions, its vanities, its pleasures!—Her long-lavished wealth, her flattered beauty, —all that had seduced, all that had betrayed her,—could neither restore connexion to her ideas, nor coolness to her

blood. That son whom she wildly demanded, whose presence she continually implored—to whom she declared she must confide a secret more important than existence, vainly knelt whole nights by her bedside; and receiving there the burning tears of anguish and remorse, well remembered those tender ones she had shed upon his infant bosom. To exist without knowing him had been the guilt of her life, and to expire without recollecting him made the misery of her death.

Of the various hearts thus acutely wrung, Colonel Mordaunt's, through the medium of his pride, was not perhaps the least sufferer. Yet since it could no longer create surprise that he should desire the absence of a young man so peculiarly circumstanced as Montague was now publicly known to be, he assisted to hasten his departure; vainly endeavouring, in the interim, to

bury, in a profound and disdainful silence, all suspicion of his own previous knowledge of the past. By a will made soon after their marriage, the Colonel knew himself to be his wife's sole heir. He had not, however, failed to keep a jealous eye upon her during her sickness: but the circumstances that attended it, sufficiently precluded all possibility of a new arrangement, whatever might have been her wishes. Strangers, therefore,—strangers at least in blood,—were to revel in Mrs. Mordaunt's splendid fortune, while nothing became the property of her unfortunate son, but a picture of her given him by Charles Mordaunt. Often, however, did he gaze on this, the interesting companion of his approaching voyage. It represented her in the pride of youth and beauty, and, to the perfect regularity of her own features, added, at least in his imagination, some of those touching and, simple

graces that marked Miss Rochford. She seemed to be about two or three and twenty: it had therefore probably been drawn at the very period when he was taken from her in the dressing-room: and, while her lovely outline played before his fancy, he strove, "through the long perspective of distant years," to ascertain the shadowy recollection. It was a period, alas! too distinctly marked to his father, by jealousy, by dissention, by all the acute and soul-harrowing feelings which at length drove him to the extremity that separated them for ever.

As the vessel receded from those luckless shores on which both his peace and his existence had been so nearly wrecked, the feelings of Montague gradually harmonised. Of those he left behind him, Charles Mordaunt alone excited a lasting regret. In the bosom of that generous young man he had

had seen a noble spirit of honour and of rectitude, which he could not too deeply lament was sullied with an almost incurable vice. Yet of the vice that events had combined to cherish, events had also shown him the danger and the evil: nor did he want a mind to reflect upon, nor a heart to feel them. His purse, while Montague continued abroad, was liberally open to the latter: and there was something singularly affecting in the situation of two young men, the one of whom bestowed what he did not think his own; while the other, from the pressure of circumstances, received what might justly be deemed so, as an obligation. In letters which, during a moment of phrensy, had increased the fever of his mind, Montague now sought its balm: for what is there, self-reproach excepted, to which affection is not a balm? It is happily a property peculiar to that feeling only, to convert

the heart's best nourishment into poison. Yet of the extent of his indiscretions he was still most painfully sensible; since they had induced him to receive from young Mordaunt testimonies of kindness he would have disdained from any other human being, and which, even to him, he burnt to be acquitted of. But it is the nature of some errors, perhaps of all, to ascertain their punishment: and the proud heart that, disdaining to bound its follies, arrogates too much self-dependence, will almost always find in their consequences that it has left itself too little. Sir Arthur's indulgence Montagüe had sufficiently proved to rely on it, and he felt a tender confidence that Miss Rochford would pardon faults deeply lamented, and grievously expiated. It was to his father he most anxiously looked forward. His letter seemed to announce that he would be in England as soon, or sooner, than his son:

but,

but, as of the state of his circumstances he said nothing, and even spoke of himself as returning in the train of Lord Montresor, Montague, who had imbibed from Sir Arthur the persuasion that his father was rather an interesting visionary, than an active character, easily concluded that they had not prospered according to his wishes. Such, however, is the influence of the gentler affections, when not expelled by selfish and tumultuous passions, that the same young man to whom, in the wild career of the former, an impoverished father could not have failed to become an object of regret, now felt that the tender tie which before bound them to each other would be a thousand times more endeared should his son be all that was left to Mr. Cavendish.

By a sweet association of ideas, therefore, happiness and England became in-

timately blended in the imagination of Montague. The breezes that blew him thither seemed fraught with health; and, like sailors in a calenture, he felt persuaded that the verdure of his native woods and fields would expel alike from his frame and his heart every feverish or corrosive tendency that preyed on either. He greeted at length the welcome shores; and though neither verdure nor sunshine enlivened them, that bright beam with which the eye gilds every object it loves, left nothing wanting in the season. That the vessel in which the governor-general was expected had been seen in the Channel he learnt before he landed: and he now impatiently hastened to London, assured that his father would be there before him. In this expectation, however, he was disappointed. On stopping at the house whither his letters for Sir Arthur had been directed, he found that the latter had re-

moved

moved to a more eligible situation, and that no person of the name of Cavendish, nor any one in the household of Lord Montresor, was yet arrived. There was a charm in Lady Selina's door that powerfully attracted him towards it. Yet, since to present himself there with so much abruptness might produce disagreeable consequences to Miss Rochford, and to neglect Sir Arthur might incur unpleasant ones to himself, he resisted the temptation. A faint hope too struggled in his bosom, though against all reasonable probability, that as both were in daily expectation of his arrival, he might probably, by some fortunate chance, find them together. He had, indeed, written most fully the detail of events he shrunk from relating: not, perhaps, without a secret view of so bribing their hearts in his cause, as to leave little to the decision of their judgements.

A travelling

A travelling carriage, followed by a chaise and suitable attendants, drove by him as he was walking up the street to which he had been directed: but they attracted not his notice till he was suddenly struck with seeing them stop, as he believed, at Sir Arthur's door.—Could he be deceived? The sudden palpitation of his heart, and the emotion that diffused itself over his frame, hardly left him power to hasten onwards. He came close enough, however, to discern that two gentlemen alighted from the first carriage. The one, as nearly as he could distinguish, was handsome, sunburnt, and his imagination told him had a military air: the second was not so tall, and appeared something younger. Both were in deep mourning: and in the one, or the other, he assured himself that he at length saw a father. An exquisite and inexplicable emotion at once made his head swim, and suffused his eyes with tears.

As

As he was in one of the longest streets of London, it was necessary, however, to recover both his sight and his fortitude before he could possibly reach the door. The first question there assured him that he was right; Lord Montresor and a gentleman were indeed arrived, but of the name of the latter, the servant, who perfectly knew Montague, was uninformed. Impatiently, and without the power of deliberating, he followed the man up stairs, where he burst in at once upon the astonished Sir Arthur, and the elder of the gentlemen he had seen. The good baronet, though ill able to stand from the attacks of the gout, clasped him to his bosom. Then, suddenly recollecting himself, turned round, and presented him, by the name of William Cavendish, to Lord Montresor.

"Pardon me, my Lord," said the disappointed young man, past all power of dissembling,

sembling, and struck with melancholy apprehension at remembering Lord Montresor's mourning—"I hoped—I had expected to see a father here!"

"And do you *not* see a father?" replied a voice, the tender tones of which Montague could almost have persuaded himself were familiar to his ear.—"Ah William, beloved William!" said Lord Montresor, folding him in his arms, "I had indeed forgotten I was one, when I meditated but for a moment to deceive you." The sweet and joyful sensations that succeeded were past all language. Ah! happiness and England were indeed found together: and the hour in which they were found seemed to overpay an age of feverish suffering.

"I had indeed meditated," said Lord Montresor, after having somewhat satisfied his eyes and heart, "a plot upon my son.

Sir

Sir Arthur and I, in the profoundness of our sagacity, were to play the austere judges. I, you know, was to weigh his talents, his character, his conduct," continued he, turning with a smile to his friend,— "but I saw his features, and I forgot all the rest." Sir Arthur, who did not feel a positive assurance that all the rest would be quite so gratifying to Lord Montresor as the latter seemed to imagine, now took the opportunity of recounting, in a summary manner, the cause of Montague's expedition abroad: and while a thousand varying recollections past through the mind of the young man, and wandered in different suffusions over his features, Sir Arthur strove to direct the conversation of Lord Montresor to subjects that more immediately concerned himself.

"I carried to India," said the latter, deeply sighing, "a lacerated heart. What passed

passed in it for many years my letters may have informed you better than my recollections will ever do. At the time I left England, I well knew myself to be, by the death of an infant, next in succession to Lord Montresor's title: but I buried the secret proudly in my bosom; for his fortune, the fruit of his talents, was his own to dispose of: and that to which I had no claim, either by personal merit or service, I could not even wish to appropriate. Yet to give to my son what the misfortunes of his father, and the misconduct of—his mother," he faintly added, while the 'hectic of a moment passed across his cheek,' "threatened wholly to deprive him of, was the pre-eminent and indulged wish of my heart. Lord Montresor had, in my boyish days, tenderly loved me. He continued to do so even during the eclipse of all my better faculties; or rather that very circumstance increased his love: and the

eager desire he saw in me to deserve his regard before I would benefit by it, a desire that seemed to outlive almost every other principle of life, except paternal affection, attached him deeply and invariably to my fate. When my better reason returned, I became the valued friend, the endeared companion, the chosen confidant of a heart overwhelmed with many cares and some sorrows:—finally, I became the heir of Lord Montresor: he died during the passage home.—The love of wealth or distinction, my son," he continued, turning to William Cavendish, "was not, believe me, the inherent foible of my nature; it was the offspring of misfortune, and must find its apology in our mutual use of them. But where," he added, endeavouring with a smile to disperse the gloomy train of images that had insensibly taken possession of his mind, "where is that blessing I am yet to bestow on my son? Where is the sweet

girl who is to be my second acquaintance in England?"

Clara had not been forgotten by Sir Arthur, nor was she slow in obeying his summons. The heart of her lover beat quick at her approach. Anxiously he raised his eyes, and imploringly directed them from her to his father, as if to deprecate the censure which he feared her very looks might convey: but Miss Rochford had too deeply shared in the sorrow of the past, and seen it through too favourable a medium, in Sir Arthur's representations, to retain any sentiment stronger than sympathy or tenderness. She could not forget that it was from her hand, though innocently, that Mrs. Mordaunt had received a death-wound; and could the tears of Clara have remedied the misfortune which she accused herself of having caused, William Cavendish had not lost a mother. Even a secret sense of

of injustice to her lover seemed to blend with every other feeling, on remembering that there were moments when allurement and misrepresentation had almost shaken her affianced faith. In her eyes, therefore, he read only a sweet responsive sentiment, more sad than reproachful. But though from them he could demand an act of oblivion, it was what he could not so readily grant to himself. In his father he saw all that his imagination or his heart demanded: anxiously, therefore, he directed his thoughts inward, to weigh what he should find there, and deeply revolved the manner in which he should introduce a subject which he could not resolve wholly to suppress.

"I have seen a face like that before," said Lord Montresor, turning to Sir Arthur, after gazing long and mournfully upon the features of his son, whose deep reverie had

suffused his cheek with a soft and almost feminine glow.

"Could you bear to see it again, my father?" said William, expressively raising his eyes. "No longer *living*, indeed!" he added, with an emotion increased by that he had caused; "but surely," and he drew from his bosom the picture of his mother, "surely it will gratify her spirit to know that my father has shed over *this* the tear of absolution and pardon." Lord Montresor, at once comprehending him, snatched the picture—the fond memorial of many a happy—many a miserable day; and gazing on it, as it still sweetly smiled, while the fair original was low in dust, covered it with kisses; then, continuing to press it alternately to his lips and his heart, he buried his face over it, as if willing to conceal, even from himself, the acuteness of his recollection, the excess of his regret. Impressed

pressed with tender sympathy, the two young people sunk at his feet.

"She made, I am told, another choice," said Lord Montresor, as, affectionately raising them, he seemed by a violent effort to recover himself: "Was it"—and his voice again faultered—"was it a happy one?"

"Far—far the contrary, I fear," said Clara; first capable of speaking. "By a concurrence of circumstances it was my lot to be a witness of those domestic dissentions that arose from mutual disesteem. Colonel Mordaunt," she added, turning to her lover, as if she feared to shock Lord Montresor with a name that could not but be hateful to his heart, "was proud, tyrannical, self-interested. Of the latter trait in his character she had proofs so convincing, that it induced her, before she followed him abroad,

abroad, which she did under a gloomy impression that she should never return, to entrust to my charge a sacred deposit. I suspect—indeed, from the solemnity with which it was delivered to me, I have reason to assure myself, that it can be only her will."

It was indeed her will: the treasured secret that had lain heavy on her soul in her last hour, and which, living in a circle where she could find every thing rather than a friend, she had been reduced to confide to the integrity of so young a creature as Miss Rochford; well persuaded that its tenor was too advantageous to the latter, not to be duly asserted by her relations.—Mrs. Mordaunt, in pursuance of the plan which she had long before conceived of uniting Miss Rochford with her son-in-law, bequeathed to each a very considerable legacy; unfettered, however, by any restriction.

striction. The greater part of her fortune was allotted to her son by Mr. Cavendish. No mention was made of Colonel Mordaunt, but that the marriage articles prescribed; and every particular was drawn up with a legal skill and precision that, while it denoted a masterly hand, at once pointed out the distrust and resentment of her who dictated it.

That Colonel Mordaunt triumphed not in the spoils of the Cavendish family, could not but be gratifying to the man whom he had oppressed. In the tears of Lord Montresor had been perfected the absolution of the dead in this world, while his benediction, together with Sir Arthur's, soon completed the happiness of the living. And so deeply was the lesson of moderation and self-distrust impressed on the heart of William Cavendish, that Miss Rochford had,

had, indeed, never cause to regret she gave his life a charm, nor his father to blush for having struggled to give it a distinction.

H. L.

THE

CLERGYMAN'S TALE.

HENRY.

"Let your gentle wishes go with me to my trial; wherein if I be foiled, there is but one shamed that was never gracious; if killed, but one dead that is willing to be so.—I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me—the world no injury, for in it have I nothing; only in this world I fill up a place that may be better supplied when I have made it empty." SHAKSPEARE.

AT a county meeting of Warwickshire gentlemen in the month of August, a proposal was made for a party to shoot game in North Wales during the season next ensuing. Among those who joined to form it, was Mr. Pembroke, a gentleman whose situation

situation entitled him to lead in any pursuit he adopted, but who was without the least taste for the one in question, save that it was exercise. He had too discriminating a mind not to discover that the company, with the train of servants, dogs, and horses, must be an intolerable grievance to the rustics, who yet dared not complain. Game the party rarely could find: but the riotous enjoyment of luxurious suppers, and a boundless indulgence of the bottle, made the major part of the company what is rather indefinitely expressed by the term *jolly*—a mode of felicity which it had never been the fortune of Mr. Pembroke to partake in:—he often, therefore, separated from his associates, to seek in the sequestered and wild scenes around him an indulgence more congenial to his taste; and to ponder upon a strange though common calamity that empoisoned the lot which so many of his neighbours were for ever tempted to envy.

Mr.

Mr. Pembroke was a younger branch of that celebrated family; which, not valuing itself more on antiquity than achievements, had always proudly refused to bury *name* under *title*. A retired and literary taste, which he early discovered, had made his father, whose fortune was scanty, destine this son for the church. After a due progress he was sent to Oxford, to finish his studies, and take orders. With the solemn considerations of his future life, romantic visions often blended in the heart of the young man; and his circle of society was so confined, that a cousin of his own name, as poor as himself, soon became their object. Nature had not been so niggardly as fortune to the lovers; therefore, in mutually pleasing, there was no other difficulty than the sweet doubt which it is almost happiness to know, though it is absolute felicity to end. A remote prospect of church preferment was, however, all that flattered their wish

wish of uniting; and, till that uncertain good should be attained, the enamoured pair cherished a tenderness which, while it governed the heart of the young lady, guided and elevated that of him whom she had chosen. By the singular whim of a very distant kinsman, and a happy coincidence of both christian and surnames, it was pointed out to Mr. Pembroke, that he might claim, under a will made ere he received existence, the large possessions of the famous, or rather infamous, miser, Henry Pembroke of Farleigh—a lonely cipher in creation, who lived unbeloved, and died unlamented; having gratified the poor but single pride of his nature, in erecting, merely to fill up his hours, and tax the strength of those labourers whom he scantily paid, a magnificent mansion, the very worst room in which he thought too good for himself. Hardly had he accomplished this sole labour of his almost animal existence, ere death enclosed

him

him in a much smaller habitation; and his large possessions became an estate in fee to the lawyers, rather than to his heirs, so questionable was his whimsical testament. By a happiness in his fortune rather than any peculiar right, together with the professional exertions of a counsel not more eminent for talents than a generous use of them, the young Henry Pembroke established his claim; and had no sooner taken possession of Farleigh, and its domains, than he gratified his heart and married his cousin. And now, then, he was surely happy—Ah, no! he soon became painfully sensible that the speck scarce seen in a character, when contemplated through the medium of partiality, and at a distance, forces itself for ever on the perception when the object is contiguous; and, when that object is beloved, in time spreads over even the heart. Mrs. Pembroke no sooner found an ample fortune added to that name which she had always

regarded

regarded with a childish veneration, than she buried a thousand merits under a single failing. Lovely in person, accomplished, and sensible, with a benevolence of nature that made her, to all whom she thought inferior to herself, a ministering angel, as such was she worshipped by her poorer neighbours; while to her equals, or superiors, her air became repulsive, her manners almost forbidding.—Her husband was the last person to discover this foible, but not even he had influence enough over her to correct it.—Happily, though the vicinity of Farleigh supplied many genteel associates, it had not any family entitled to dispute consequence with Mrs. Pembroke; of course she lived amicably with all, and beloved by many of her neighbours: but whenever the season for visiting London recurred, her miseries annually re-commenced; and her *rights* in society became the only subject of her conversation, the unremitting cause of

domestic

domestic contention and rage. In vain her footmen were drubbed,—in vain her coachman was often pulled from his box; she constantly dismissed the clowns who gave way to an upstart of yesterday, though a coronet was on the carriage; and by this single foible, not only kept herself and servants, but her husband, on an eternal fret. After a thousand broils that made Mr. Pembroke blush, and a thousand impertinences which he was sometimes in danger of being obliged to defend, his lady declared the modes of a London life insupportable to her, and gave up her town-house as a needless expense. With a fond predilection for domestic society, and a right to every indulgence that fortune can give, Mr. Pembroke was, therefore, condemned to pass the few months he necessarily attended the house of commons in a paltry confined lodging in London, while the remainder of the year he spent in a home so magnificent as to make him but the more sensible

of

of the folly by which he suffered. Nor was the arrogance of the Londoners Mrs. Pembroke's only affliction. A few years after her marriage she began to experience the *family* grief, and, not having yet borne a child, she was obliged to conclude that the noble name she inherited, for many generations renowned, would never be continued by herself.—No medicine did she leave untried—no mineral-water untasted, which was recommended as likely to enable her to bring an heir to the *ancient house* of Pembroke.—Eighteen years had elapsed in vain hopes and new experiments, when, to the equal astonishment of herself and husband, Mrs. Pembroke was obviously pregnant. Farleigh was immediately half pulled down, and new nurseries adjoining to her own apartments erected for the expected stranger, with every modern improvement which architects recommended, or her reading had suggested.—The appointed time made Mrs. Pembroke mother of—a

girl.

girl.—Hardly had she gratitude enough to thank God for her own safety, or a living child, so mortified was she at not having borne a boy. Her husband, surprised to see himself in reality a father, felt no want of a son, while clasping the infant Julia to his bosom; and the mother at length reconciled herself to the cruel disappointment.—Miss Pembroke was committed to the care of her nurse and maids, with an almost regal parade:—before she could walk her anxious mother lost whole sleepless nights in considering what other misses she might with propriety visit, and, before she was able to speak, who it was possible she could, without derogating from her birth, marry. Mr. Pembroke soon became sensible that it was not proper for him at all times and seasons to run in and out of the apartment of Julia; and he had generally the ill luck to be too early or too late in seeking her company in the garden: for the apprehensive mother

kept a watch even upon the sun, lest he should rudely visit the delicate complexion of Miss Pembroke.

Accustomed soon to submit to what he could not approve, the liberal mind of the father saw in this childish pride and weak anxiety a thousand dangers growing with the infant. With more eagerness than he ever prayed for one child did he now implore the saving blessing of a second, that the hopes and attentions of his wife might at least be divided:—of this he, however, found no probability; and he too fondly loved the mother of his darling daughter to pain her by a secret or illicit attachment.—*Julia*, therefore,—*her Julia*—*Miss Pembroke* rather—to all human appearance was the sole heiress of Farleigh:—the doting mother daily assured the servants of this; they circulated the assurance among the neighbours; and all with one voice enforced it to the

the very child, as soon as her mind became equal to comprehending the term.

Accustomed to ruminate on these domestic errors, and probable evils, Mr. Pembroke, as he grew into life, acquired a pensive abstracted air, and a habit of wandering alone.—During this shooting excursion nothing had occurred to call forth the social principle, still less any partial sensibility, in the generous soul of Mr. Pembroke, and his thoughts insensibly sunk into their habitual channel. He soon found himself thoroughly tired; and taking his horse early one morning, he separated not only from his friends, but his servants, to follow without choice the path before him—it led to rich and solitary scenery; yet the hanging cots of the peasants on ridges of the mountains sometimes added the softer shades of life to those which were almost savage. The woods soon sheltered him from the observa-

tion of his jolly party, and he found even loneliness enjoyment. Yet the beauties of nature upon which his eye dwelt only shared his contemplations with his own peculiar destiny; and even while his senses luxuriously partook of pleasure, his heart was pinched to the core by a hopeless, a secret vexation.—To have Julia, his lovely, his amiable Julia, fostered in arrogance, while yet too young to rise into dignity, was indeed a cruel reflexion. Yet, alas! how was it to be prevented?

The rude path which the cattle had worn on the side of the mountain was overhung at intervals by red crags of rock, and at others by wildly spreading oaks; while here and there an humble hut exhibited the promise of society which it could hardly be said to supply: from these the playful babes ran in and out, almost in a state of nature, and seemed, like the blossoms around them, to

ripen

ripen on the breath of heaven. While gazing on a cluster of these young ones, it suddenly occurred to Mr. Pembroke's mind that could he obtain, or purchase, a boy, by presenting it to his wife as his own, he should at once indirectly check the weak pride that shocked him, and by limiting her hopes of Julia's fortune, oblige her, in the education of a child so dear, a little to regard his opinion. He recollected with surprise and pleasure that he was alone, and it was the first time for many years that he had ever been so. Secure, by this means, that no prying domestic could publish the truth, he resolved to attempt obtaining an infant boy, to whom his patronage, and a liberal education, would eventually make an ample amends for the maternal endearments of which he must necessarily deprive him.

At this juncture a fine chubby-faced child peeped over a crag just above his head, and shouting,

shouting, gaily clapped his hands, and ran away. Mr. Pembroke hastily alighted, and hanging the bridle of his horse over an antique stump of a tree, mounted the rude steps cut in the rock, and soon saw, at the door of a miserable cot, a little withered old woman knitting; while in the house one of the same sex, but younger, was distributing a scanty breakfast to five children, of whom the boy in question seemed to be the third.—On finding that he was neither the youngest, nor the elder, Mr. Pembroke was persuaded this boy would prove the one whom the mother would soonest consent to part with:—he therefore addressed the poor woman in the most ingratiating terms, but was in a manner confounded on finding that she did not understand him, and replied in a tongue to which he was no less a stranger. He now tried to engage the regards of the children; won them to play with his watch chain; and placing its

appendage

appendage at the ear of each, delighted in the innocent surprise which they all united to express in the same unintelligible manner. Even their mother modestly drew near to survey the ticking wonder; and Mr. Pembroke saw with astonishment that his own country could afford beings as wholly unversed in the improvements of polished life as the savages of America. Of gold and its importance the poor woman had, however, a vague idea, by the air with which she surveyed a well-filled purse which he had inadvertently put up when he left home, and till this moment found a troublesome companion.—Gladly throwing it into the lap of the careworn matron, he thought his view accomplished, and the boy, whom he now took into his arms, henceforward his own. Here he however erred. Nature, most active in the most ignorant, made the mother, when she learned from this action his design, fly into a transport of fear and

fury:

fury: throwing back the purse, she appeared ready to second her incomprehensible oration with blows; Mr. Pembroke therefore judged it prudent to remount his horse hastily, and pursue his way down the path of the mountain. As is natural in all cases of disappointment, he sought, and found, every possible argument that might console him. —"How," sighed he, "had I obtained this boy, could I ever have gained his affections? Ah, what babe have I ever loved like my own sweet Julia! Nature, true, though indefinable, in all her operations, binds the parent to the child and the child to the parent, by a ligament too fine for human skill to form, or break. Yet, could I once have a boy, how sweetly might my remaining years pass away—in guiding, guarding, loving him, as well, though more rationally, as my wife does her daughter."

Mr. Pembroke's attention was suddenly detached

detached from these contemplations by the exquisite beauty of the solitude into which he had at length sunk. The road was cut through a woody dell, while jutting hills on either side half embowered him in variety of verdure, slightly tinted with the early hues of autumn. This beautiful road meandered in its course like a river; while the enclosing hills changed their appearance at almost every step his horse made; now clothed to the round tops with velvet verdure; now only broken crags of richly shaded rock; now overhung with lofty woods. The dewy freshness of the morning improved the romantic charm of the scene; for while the one enchanted the sense, the other indulged it. That intuitive elegance and refinement which enables some minds to give half the graces they discover, made Mr. Pembroke check his horse; and sweetly loitering at every new turn, survey with

regret

regret the one which he could no longer continue to behold. He was now in the very depth of the dell: an antique grey rock seemed cleft by the club of some giant, and hanging over his head, discharged a mountain torrent, which having first formed a pool, rushed along a stony moss-grown bed, with a meandering course, similar to that of the road. On surveying the impending rock more curiously, he perceived a plank thrown as a bridge over the fall of water, from one point of stone to the other, with a slight balustrade; but so tottering and aërial appeared the whole construction, that Mr. Pembroke rather concluded it to be an object from the window of some unseen dwelling, than erected for any accommodation to man. Goats hung browsing about the bridge, and the whole wild scene struck him as so picturesque and interesting, that, alighting, he rudely sketched the outline in

his

his pocket-book, resolving to employ the evening in finishing the drawing, while yet the objects lived to his imagination.

When again on horseback, the turn of the ground shut at once from his eyes the road and brook that had so charmed them. He had not, however, proceeded far on his way, before he was roused by a deadly shriek, as of a human voice. He started—listened—but it was not repeated. Convinced that he had passed no vestige of a habitation, he was again proceeding when a strong conviction that the cry could not be that of any animal, struck on his recollection: the mere possibility that the bridge might have endangered some human being, made him feel it his duty to return and satisfy his mind. The pool formed at the foot of the rock, by the fall of the streamlet, was so overgrown with bushes, that it was not easy for Mr. Pembroke to penetrate

penetrate through them; but how did he rejoice in his humane exertion when he found that it would save the life of a fellow-creature. Close under the rock, upon its face, he beheld a child, either stunned by the fall or choked by the water. With the crook of his whip he caught the petticoats of the babe, and drew it near enough to take it up. Laden with the precious burden, he again forced his way through the brake. The usual means soon made the infant disgorge a quantity of water; and its kind preserver tenderly chafed its little hands and temples. Yet he feared that all his cares were too late, as the only signs of life he could discover were a faint warmth, and almost imperceptible motion about the heart. Apprehending the child's head might be hurt, he threw up a profusion of rich auburn ringlets which hung over a face that, though burnt by the sun, appeared a model of beauty. A slight contusion was discernible

discernible on the temple of the lovely boy, for such Mr. Pembroke found his *protégé* to be. Happily, he had in his pocket a hunter's bottle of brandy, which his wife ever carefully ordered his servant to put there; and pouring a little of it down the throat of the child, he used some to bathe the swelling. Still the lovely infant continued motionless. Mr. Pembroke anxiously looked for some vestige of a human dwelling, but in vain—never was scene more solitary! He hallooed; but the echo of his own voice was the only sound that reached his ear. Distressed at the idea that the precious babe might die for want of proper assistance, he now lamented having dropped his company and servants. And who could the sweet boy be? Lovely as a babe of Paradise, yet clad in the raiment of poverty: —even his little feet were without shoes, and cut by the flint of the rock. While exerting himself to wring the infant's

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wet clothes, ah! whispered his heart, if heaven should have heard my prayer, and given me this boy to accomplish my pure view, how happy will I make him. It is plain, whoever he belongs to, his parents can hardly maintain him: yet heaven, that denies me a son of my own, has given to these peasants a Grecian Cupid. But while I thus commune with myself, may I not suffer the blessing to escape me, and the babe to perish for want of a surgeon? Mounting his horse again, with the lifeless child before him, nestled close under his coat, Mr. Pembroke hastened onward; vainly hoping that each turn of the road would bring him to a village or town; and no longer finding from his anxiety for his charge any charm in sequestered scenery: but after descending another irregular mountain, he saw only a barren moor, across which the road lay. His patience was nearly exhausted, when, happily, nature

did

did her own work, and relieved him from all fear on the infant's account. The brandy which the little creature had insensibly imbibed, threw into his cheeks a richer crimson than usual; and opening at last a pair of beautiful black eyes, he stared confusedly at Mr. Pembroke, and bursting into tears, demanded vehemently some unknown person, in the same unintelligible tongue that had already embarrassed his protector. That gentleman now seriously reprobated the supineness of the clergy, and the negligence of the schoolmasters, who ought long since to have made English the only language in the king's dominions: yet, satisfying himself from this mark of infantine ignorance, that the boy whom his heart already adopted, was, however eminently endowed by nature, only the son of a herdsman, he no longer made it a question whether he should henceforward call him his own. In his diurnal stores he had some bis-

cuits

cuits and spiced bread, with which he sought to calm the little agitations which a moment produces, a moment disperses, at the happy age when reflexion points not the pang. Of the first the babe partook with a heartiness that showed his breakfast had been but scanty; then, playing with the rest, he would in turn feed his benefactor; at intervals, hiding his lovely head under the protecting coat, then archly peeping it out again with smiling irresistible confidence and fondness. This child *may*, perhaps, love me, cried Mr. Pembroke, pressing him yet closer—yes, this child *will* love me, for he is too young to be sensible of any tie stronger than that which my heart now forms between us.—"Precious smiler!" added he, kissing the beautiful eyes of the endearing infant, "thou shall be my own Henry—my Henry Pembroke! I will join thy hand to Julia's as a brother; and to the last hour of my life shalt thou find father, mother,

ther, friend, in the man to whom heaven itself surely has given thee!"

Every moment confirmed this generous resolution. Those short sobs and imperfect moanings of the interesting babe, that seemed to spring from the probable loss of a maternal bosom to lean on, now gave way to exquisite delight. Mr. Pembroke almost fancied a horse must be a new object to his *protégé*: yet, soon familiar with it, the child threw one of his graceful limbs over its neck, and with sweet mimicry he too would manage it, he too would stroke its mane, and lavish fond caresses; till quite tired out, his little head sunk against Mr. Pembroke's bosom, where fatigue soon threw him into a deep sleep.

In this situation the travellers rode into a small town, where alighting, Mr. Pembroke retired to a chamber; and putting

with his own hands the sleeping Cupid to bed, he hastily summoned both a surgeon and a tailor: the former declared the contusion trifling, and the limbs of the babe unhurt—the latter measured him as he slept for a masculine habit, which for a double payment he agreed to sit up all night to make.

The wish of knowing who the child at intervals yet moaned for had already vanished from the mind of Mr. Pembroke, since it now included a discovery of his parentage, which, strangely qualifying with his own conscience, he was secretly determined *not* to know. Every person in this inn spoke Welch, for which reason he would not suffer one of the servants to come into the chamber, rather choosing to sleep with the babe himself.—The flood of tears, and new demands of the child on missing some one when he first waked, were at once,

however,

however, forgotten, when Mr. Pembroke produced his fine boy's habiliments in the morning. Wholly taken up with this important change and acquisition, the babe displayed a grace and manly spirit that bound for ever to his fate his generous benefactor.

A post-chaise was ordered into which Mr. Pembroke lifted his little treasure, and hastily drove towards Warwickshire; having sent back a Welch lad to order home his suite from the mountains.—The apprehension which he at first entertained of the child's addressing strangers, soon gave place to a degree of surprise at perceiving the terror he always showed on the approach of unknown persons, when he never failed eagerly to fly to those arms which fondly folded him, grateful for the generous confidence.

It was not till the travellers were fairly out of Wales that Mr. Pembroke found himself at leisure enough to reflect upon the difficulty of disposing of a little creature, for whose future welfare he had voluntarily made himself wholly responsible. On mature deliberation, he diverged from the line to his own house to put up at the Swan at Stratford upon Avon, which was among the demesnes of Farleigh. Mrs. Fenton, who, with her husband, had long been his tenants, was herself a mother, and readily took to her good graces the little unintelligible Welchman. She summoned both her sons from school to play with and teach him English. Mr. Pembroke found, on examining those boys, that they were in so good a train for education, as to determine him to place Henry with them, under the same master. That the lovely child might have a legal right to the name his benefactor was resolved to give him, Mr. Pembroke requested

requested Mr. and Mrs. Fenton to answer for him at the font, where he himself attended, and saw the interesting stranger registered by the name of Henry Pembroke. The good folks at the Swan melted into tears when they found the squire was "so main good to his little by-blow." Mr. Pembroke, with hardly less emotion, recommended him to their kindness, and implored heaven to render him affectionate and grateful to his *fond father*. Having seen the sweet boy provided with every necessary, and established a strict intercourse with Mrs. Fenton and the school-master, Mr. Pembroke sat out for Farleigh.

An absence so unusual as the first surprised Mrs. Pembroke; its strange continuance at Stratford distressed her: nor could she forbear mingling some reproaches with the welcome which her heart yet gave her husband.—Julia knew only indulgence, felt

only

only joy, and hanging round the neck of her dear, dear papa, implored him to stay with her for ever and for ever. The tender father felt shocked at recollecting the mortifying check which her mother's error must subject both to endure: not that his tenderness for his daughter had suffered any diminution; his liberal heart was large enough to contain both Julia and the interesting Henry.

He was so near Stratford that he had often occasion, and always opportunity, to visit Henry; nor did he ever see him without renewing his thanks to heaven for singling him out to save so striking, so superior a creature. The affectionate boy was told that the arms he flew into were those of a father, and soon found English enough to impart to the beloved visitor all his little joys and sorrows; but with the Welch language he seemed to lose all recollection of

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those to whom he had spoken it. In reality, the age he had now reached, with the change in his dress, the variety of scenes and objects; together with the busy, though uniform duties of a school life, had at once effaced whatever had been impressed on his infant mind, which was in too crude a state to know more than wants when Mr. Pembroke found him: these were cherished into wishes which his fondness delighted to gratify. The more dear the foundling became, the more difficulty did the nominal father find in avowing that title, lest he should be obliged to withdraw to a certain degree from the endearments of the child, or see Mrs. Pembroke's jealousy and disgust embitter the sweet boy's life, and perhaps his own. Almost forgetting the object which he at first had in view, he half resolved to bury in his bosom the secret, and, by educating Henry at a greater distance from the family, keep his existence for ever from his lady's knowledge.

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This question was, however, only one to his own bosom; for not a being around him was ignorant of the claim which he had given the young Henry to his name; nor did any one doubt the child's natural right to it. The grooms sent the tidings through the maids to Mrs. Pembroke's and Miss Julia's own women; who felt so much indignation at finding the latter had a rival in her father's affection, as to venture hinting this painful tale in Mrs. Pembroke's hearing. Though pride made that lady command them both to be silent, she could not, alas! "unknow" what they had told her:—the conviction sunk deep; for even her neighbours, as if impatient to convince her that she had no more power to fix a husband's fidelity than themselves, sent her in one day three anonymous letters; various in spelling and style, but agreeing in matter. Each separately apprised her that Mr. Pembroke spent his whole time at the

the Swan at Stratford, where he kept a pretty bar-maid, by whom he had a bastard son. The pride which made Mrs. Pembroke a troublesome member to society, prevented her from becoming a torment to her husband: she burnt the letters without mentioning them, silenced the servants, and conducted herself with a dignified mildness to Mr. Pembroke. But though the torch of jealousy was turned inward, it was not extinguished: the cruel flame preyed on her very vitals. Constraint, sadness, nervous complaints, tremulous anguish, at length proved to the husband that his wife had found or felt the secret, and it became the least pain he could give her to avow it. A word on her part concerning his absence drew from a heart wholly her own the preconcerted tale by which he was resolved to abide :—" a hunting-match—a country inn, a light, but lovely girl, who was determined to seduce him—intoxication—a moment of folly—

folly—an age of repentance—an angel boy whom the mother had died to give birth to, and whom it was his duty to love and provide for." Mrs. Pembroke heard this recital with a variety of emotions: the man of her choice, the delicate, the refined Henry,—he whom alone she loved, —had then been capable of a gross and vulgar inclination—and for a low and vulgar woman too!—strange! incomprehensible!—A moment's thought reminded her that this vulgar creature was dead, and that she had no longer the mortification of sharing her husband's affections with such a rival. But then the child was yet living—Heavens! and could the lovely Julia be levelled one moment in the heart of her father with the offspring of a bar-maid! Mr. Pembroke's penetrating eye saw in that of his wife the whole chain of her ideas, and as it was only necessary to moderate her pride, he soothed her heart with

new

new vows of faith; no more to be broken—of love that should last for ever. She, something fretfully, replied, that since the thing had happened, and could not now be otherwise, she should forgive him: though much she wondered that he could forgive himself. What would *he* have thought, had she for one moment descended to turn her eyes from himself to his groom? She hoped, however, that it did not form a part of his view to educate the poor wretched infant on a level with Miss Pembroke. Should the boy hereafter turn out well, she might, perhaps, be brought to countenance him; and should get her uncle in the Indies to push his fortune there: but this must be on the express condition that he never attempted to take the name which her daughter and the heiress of their house bore, since that could only be perpetuated by her husband's assuming it. "Do you recollect, madam," cried Mr. Pembroke,

coldly

coldly withdrawing the arms that a moment before fondly clasped her, "that you speak to the father of Henry? Forget not either that I can give a child so dear more than the name of Pembroke: correct this intolerable arrogance in yourself—check it early in Julia—educate her more humbly than heretofore; and when I see how she adorns the vaunted name of Pembroke, I shall better know what share of my fortune to bestow on the dear boy, who has no friend on the earth but myself. I shall not trouble you to procure him the patronage of your uncle: he will not need any, while heaven spares him a father."

Confirmed by this conversation in the propriety of checking the aspiring haughtiness of his wife, Mr. Pembroke no longer sunk the name or supposed rights of Henry among his own family and dependents—he soon found it right to remove him to a more

expensive

expensive and improving school, where, under a clergyman of the first manners and information, he saw the youth rapidly acquiring all that could either qualify him for society, or embellish it.

Accustomed, at length, to admit a tie to which she found it impossible to object, Mrs. Pembroke's tenderness for her husband returned in all its force. She sighed to think that Julia had a partner in her father's heart; but satisfied she herself had not any, she relied on his acting generously towards his legitimate child. To judge what was to be expected, she hinted a wish to "see the poor unhappy boy." A word was sufficient; for Mr. Pembroke longed to make his *protégé* an inmate at Farleigh: and, despite of prejudice, his lady soon beheld in all their force the charms and mental graces of Henry. "That I should ever wish to have been the mother of a bar-maid's son!"

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cried Mrs. Pembroke, turning to throw herself into the arms of her husband. "But is not this lovely child the son too of my Henry?" The little Julia, enchanted to have got a brother she knew not how, entwined her arms every moment round his neck, and he amply returned her infantine caresses.

Henry from this moment became a part of the family; and as Mrs. Pembroke promised never to refer to the misfortune of his birth, and faithfully kept her word, it was wholly dropped among the domestics. Mr. Pembroke heard from that time more of his daughter, and less of his heiress; nor was this tender condescension in the partner of his life lost on him. He no longer held up Henry to her as the rival of Julia, whose rights he regarded as inviolate: always declaring that her brother should, at a proper age, embark in whatever liberal profession

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he might prefer, and derive no more from himself than an income that would give him safety in launching into life.

The amiable Julia, as her years increased, saw the situation of Henry in a more interesting point of view. Her maid, affectionate but ignorant, had early informed her of her own advantages, and the humiliation annexed to her brother's birth. Far from exulting in her superior rights, as Julia grew old enough to estimate, she learnt to blush for them; and took delight in giving the lead on all occasions to Henry; from whose more improved understanding she derived infinite advantages. This was, indeed, a recompense to her father. What could he desire but to see this generous principle actuating the soul of his Julia, and the son whom he had adopted so worthy to excite it? The purest peace and pleasure seemed to have fixed their abode at Farleigh, when

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an unforeseen occurrence put them both to flight in a moment.

The day that gave Julia to the world had been, from its first return, annually celebrated in a sumptuous manner by her fond mother. That which made her fourteen demanded more than usual consideration, and all the neighbouring young families were invited to a *fête champêtre*, at which Julia and her brother were to preside; while the various parents formed a separate party. The latter were yet in the dining parlour, when Master Vernon rushed in with a swelled forehead and a bloody nose, to claim his mother's protection from the fury of Henry. The youth in question followed, though apparently without any hostile intention. Mr. Pembroke, vexed at seeing the pleasure of the young ones thus broken in upon, and particularly hurt by this breach of hospitality and decorum on the part of Henry,

Henry, threatened hereafter to call him to a severe account for the insult to Master Vernon. "I know of none, father," returned Henry, "committed by me.—Master Vernon, because he was a great hulking fellow, thought that he might hawl and kiss Miss Pembroke, whether she would or no. —She called on me to protect her, but he would not let her go—so I knocked him down—that's all."—"No, that is not all," cried his sobbing antagonist, whose face his mamma was tenderly dabbing with her cambric handkerchief. "Well, if I must tell the rest," sullenly added Henry, "I must."—"Ay, do young man," said the incensed Mrs. Vernon, in a flame:—"my Frank is the gentlest, dearest creature in the world!"—"He knows how to give a provocation, though he does not know how to take a punishment," rejoined Henry.—"I am sure, angry as my father seems, he would not wish me to allow any body's son to

to call his a bastard—a base-born brat."—What became of Mr. Pembroke at these words? He pressed the indignantly glowing face of the gallant boy to his bosom, while his own was suffused with even a deeper scarlet. Mrs. Vernon completed the distress of both by a course-minded apology for her dear Frank's coming out with this unlucky truth. The bright eyes of Henry, now fixed in astonishment at the *éclaircissement*, and now flashing fire at the manner of it, turned from his father to the lady, from the lady to his father.—Seeming at length to recover utterance—"*Am* I then indeed a bastard, Sir?" cried he to Mr. Pembroke:—"only tell me that—*am* I indeed a base-born beggar's brat?"—"This matter must be discussed hereafter," returned that gentleman in a faultering voice, and with a disorder that struck conviction, like a dagger, through the heart of Henry. The tears which his pride had hitherto suppressed,

ed, now fell in torrents from his eyes:—he raised them and his innocent hands in speechless reproach to heaven; then fondly clasping his father, ran abruptly out of the room.

The necessity of appeasing an ignorant woman, with other attentions to his guests, had a little withdrawn Mr. Pembroke's thoughts from this painful occurrence, when now Julia, with hardly less perturbation, made her appearance, to inquire of her father where he had sent Henry; as the whole young party waited only for him to begin the ball. This question produced a general alarm, but no information. Henry, after a minute inquiry, was not to be found:—the gaiety of the day vanished with him—Julia cried herself sick—her mother was solely intent on soothing her—Mrs. Vernon in a manner miserable at her son's disfigured face—and Mr. Pembroke, half distracted, lest the high spirit of Henry should produce

any further ill consequence. All the servants ran different ways, inquiring for him; but the gardener, who particularly loved, was determined to seek, till he found, the truant. The probable protectors of the boy were not so numerous as to perplex those in pursuit; and Henry's humble friend at once traced him to the Swan at Stratford.

Mrs. Fenton with great surprise greeted the faithful inquirer, and informed him that Master Henry was safe, and fast asleep; having arrived early in the morning (he too probably had walked half the night), with swoln eyes and blistered feet. He then immediately embarrassed Mrs. Fenton with questioning her closely about his birth. Her answers were, however, far from soothing his feelings, or satisfying his pride. He stood awhile quite aghast and silent, then sadly sighed, and faintly repeated, "The

illiberal

illiberal scoundrel was in the right, and I have no friend but Almighty God!—to him then," cried he, falling on his knees in a passion of tears, "do I commend myself, and abjure any other father!" Mrs. Fenton now persuaded him to bathe his weary feet, and retire to bed.

The gardener, holding it wise to stay with the youth, dispatched a messenger to relieve Mr. Pembroke's anxiety; and Henry, on awaking, learnt from his sorrowful friend Mrs. Fenton, that the trusty Thomas had been sent to attend him home.—"No, madam," replied the gallant boy, I have no home—I know not how to blush before my father's servants!—If he was ashamed to marry my mother, it is a punishment imposed upon him to blush before the son, to whom he has given an ignominious being!"—And blush Mr. Pembroke did; for though in another room, he lost not a syllable

syllable of the noble boy's spirited language. So elevated a pride could not but add to Henry's merits in the eyes of his benefactor; yet how was he to sooth it? —He sometimes meditated disclosing the whole affecting truth: but would the youth, who could not brook being treated as an extraneous branch of a noble and affluent family, endure to be told that he sprang from beggary, and was reared by compassion? —Perhaps, the fear of losing his hold on Henry's affections, rather dictated this caution to Mr. Pembroke than the apparent consideration for the lad's pride; since even while unresolved what to tell, or what to hide, he hastily broke in, and catching the dear exhausted youth in his arms, was choked with a variety of emotions.—Henry ardently clasped his only friend, without daring to lift his pious eyes to his face, lest they should behold there the shame of a parent. "I complain not, my father," sobbed

he,

he, clasping Mr. Pembroke yet closer: "no, bitter must be your feeling already, that you gave me not a right to the name which you never denied me.—Yet this insulted, illegitimate Henry knows not how to dishonour it.—An indignity like that of yesterday I never can again endure.—*Name* I now too certainly know I have not; but a determined spirit sometimes rises above the injustice of fortune, and makes one for itself.—That I may be enabled to return to you without blushing, let me have your blessing, your prayers, my beloved father—never till that hour shall I see Farleigh—never more behold my angel sister.—Yet tell our Julia I will strain every nerve to learn how in future to protect her from insult,—myself from ignominy.

Mr. Pembroke flattered himself that in a few days these irritated feelings would subside, and he should recover his influence over

over the youth. On the contrary, a fixedness of conduct took place in Henry of the first transports of anger, which impressed his nominal father as something almost unnaturally noble. When further urged to go home,—"Never, my father," returned the gallant boy, "till I have been a soldier;—I will be only a soldier—discard me not unblessed—bestow on me a sword, and leave me to carve my own fortune."

Mr. Pembroke soon found a resolution, which had never seemed to enter the youth's head till this unlucky brawl, invincible. The irritation of immediate injury subsided, but a melancholy insurmountable determination succeeded. It was at length agreed that Henry should no more be urged to revisit Farleigh; and his benefactor accompanied him to London; in the vicinity of which the youth was placed at a military academy of eminence. Henry had too true a taste

for

for science in general to confine himself to tactics; and his early days were so devoted to literature as to fill his mind with whatever might make his future life distinguished and happy.

It was now discovered by Julia that she must have more eminent masters than the neighbourhood of Farleigh afforded; and the delicate state of health into which Mrs. Pembroke suddenly fell, made all the punctilios she had formerly insisted on in London no longer of importance in her eyes. The family again passed part of every year there; and Henry had soon the sorrowful but sweet indulgence of blending his filial tears with those of Julia for the approaching fate of her valuable mother. That no secret anxiety might embitter to his wife the hour of mortality, Mr. Pembroke generously executed a deed of trust, ensuring all his possessions after his own death to the darling

daughter

daughter of both, allotting to Henry only a small estate of five hundred a year. The near approach of death, that awful levelling principle, had almost wholly removed from Mrs. Pembroke's mind the poor pride by which it was once actuated; while the high spirit of Henry impressed her with a very partial regard for him. "Ah! Madam," cried that youth, when first they met in London, "I knew not till the moment of insult half my obligations to you,—but can I ever forget them?"—He knelt, and kissing her hand, pressed it with reverence to his heart.—"And Julia too!" added he, remembering well that he owed no less to the sweet girl, who hung over him with increased fondness, from recollecting that she had been the innocent cause of the indignity which drove him from Farleigh.—"Is it possible," sighed poor Mrs. Pembroke, "that this noble creature should be the son of a bar-maid?"—"Alas! that

this

this charming Henry should be my brother,"—faintly then would murmur her daughter.

Each time the family returned to London Henry appeared considerably altered and improved: his carriage, formed by military exercise, even in tender youth, became manly; his mind, imbued with knowledge, firm.—Mrs. Pembroke found, in the painful necessity of preparing to take a last leave of her husband and daughter, new motives for valuing the youth to whom they were both so precious. She every day, every hour, commended to his care, his fondness, his protection, the gentle girl already growing too dear to him.—Softened and impressed by her sick mother's address, the agitated Henry sometimes flew to Julia, who, throwing herself freely into his arms, left on his cheek tears that sunk into his heart. New

to

to emotion, he often flattered himself that the suffocating throbs of such moments were only due to the occasion; while at others, prolonging the sweet embrace, he blushed at having dared to do so, and almost resolved to shun for ever the exquisite temptation.

Mrs. Pembroke expired at Farleigh, bequeathing to Henry a sum of money which the marriage articles had left at her own disposal, together with her magnificent watch, and a mourning ring, on which was engraved " remember."—Henry looked on it, and thought that she had seen into his soul. It felt like the ring of Amurath.—With this memorial of kindness came letters from Mr. Pembroke, and Julia, fraught alike with affection and sorrow: both equally conjured him to sacrifice the disgust he had to Farleigh to the love that

summoned

summoned him thither, and, by his return, animate the home thus suddenly become desolate and cheerless to its possessors.

Henry was apparently about eighteen; and had gone through his military exercises with a spirit, strength, and skill, that secured him from all future indignity; nor did he now excuse himself from returning home only because disgusted; though still he felt it would be impossible for him ever to forget the mortifying, the illiberal insult of young Vernon.—Impossible that he should reach the place his heart told him he was entitled to hold in society by any thing but his own exertions—alas! his pride he would gladly have sacrificed to his sister's request, had not the quickened pulsation in every nerve, whenever the thought of Farleigh recurred, told him the alarming truth, that it was Julia whom he would constantly see—Julia he would ever hear—Julia whom alone

his

his soul desired.—Oh! no,—tempt me not, cried he, ere he broke the seal of every letter,—tempt me not, fairest of creatures, my best beloved—never must I visit Farleigh; at least not till I have conquered the feeling that alone makes existence worth having.—On the contrary, the youth implored for liberty to serve abroad; to which Mr. Pembroke at length consented. To purchase him a commission, that gentleman, with Julia, again came to town;—the cheek of Henry burnt with indignation at the proposal.—" Is honour then bought and sold, my father? Such honour a son of yours must disdain.—Your Henry must owe to his own exertions whatever rank he obtains: let me serve the gallant Wolfe as a volunteer; for that only will I be."

As such young Pembroke was presented to the first commander of his time, now on the point of undertaking the memorable expedition

expedition against Canada. Minds like Henry's claimed his distinguished regard; nor was it ever wanting to the worthy. The magnanimous general, struck with the glowing grace of conscious integrity that marked alike the youth's carriage and address, flattered both father and son with the happiest predictions of the future fortune of the volunteer. Mr. Pembroke and Julia accompanied Henry to the port; the one fondly loading him with advice, the other no less fondly imploring it from him; nor did she ever interrupt him except to repeat the assurance that every word he uttered was indelibly engraven on her heart.

Oh, pure and elevating sense of duty! of what privations art thou not capable? With dauntless heroism this youth tore himself thus early from the only two beings in creation who had an interest in his welfare, a claim upon his feelings. Julia was unconscious

conscious of the power in the talisman which she hung upon the heart of Henry, when, on seeing him anxiously contemplate the rich curls of her auburn hair, as they playfully fell over her mourning habit, she instantly cut off the most beautiful of them all, and opening a spring behind her father's picture, inclosed there the precious treasure, and threw the chain from her own neck over that of the volunteer. He pressed the invaluable gift to his lips; he pressed too with a soft sigh the lovely hand that gave it--then hastily glanced his eye on his mourning ring, and murmured emphatically the motto.—Impatiently he rushed to the arms of Mr. Pembroke, and with a desperate resolution flew from them into the boat that bore him to his military companions.

What a sudden, what a chilling change did Henry find alike in the scene and in his

fate !—

fate!—Delighting in all the sciences, but an adept only in that of the heart, the young volunteer knew none of the little arts of life, still less did he know those of war. He was yet to learn that where one man bears arms from the love of glory, thousands seek in them a mere profession: but his discernment was too acute not early to discover that a volunteer is understood to be another term for a military Quixote, and that he himself was considered by all around him rather as the indulged son of a rich man, who could only by experience be cured of a whim, than as a bold and unsupported individual steadily pursuing a single and a great object. The elevated mind of his commander enabled him to form a juster calculation: and Henry soon won from the heroic Wolfe marks of confidence, and instances of trust, which at once gratified his feelings, and fixed his services.

In the tedious and unpromising campaign that glorious leader had "room for meditation even to madness;" and few around him caught from his eye with the quickness of Henry the impulse of his mind: but the situation was too momentous, the doubts too delicate, for either to speak. Yet, if a service of danger occurred,

"Henry was ready ere he called his name,
"And though he called another, Henry came."

So happy was the youth in executing the orders given him, that the General soon offered him a commission. "Pardon me, Sir," returned the volunteer, "I have not yet deserved it:"—these few words made such an impression upon the gallant Wolfe as in other circumstances would have ensured his fortune. Rising thus without rank through the smile of the General into consequence, young Pembroke insensibly changed from a humoured boy into a mili-

tary

tary phænomenon. It became the fashion in the camp thus to treat him, and the home dispatches spoke the same language. Mr. Pembroke now never visited the secretary's office, or bowed at the minister's levee, that he was not congratulated upon the glory which Henry was acquiring even in his nonage.

A pleasure like this was perhaps necessary to compensate to Mr. Pembroke's heart for a chagrin which even his beloved Julia gave him. Hardly had she appeared in elegant life ere she attracted so much admiration as to ensure her a choice in most families entitled to match into hers; but not one lover would Julia condescend to favour. To see her happily married was the great object with her father, and his own judgement soon inclined him towards a gentleman, who had such a disadvantage to encounter in the mind of Miss Pembroke as

hardly left him a chance of being estimated by his merits. This prejudged lover was young Vernon, who, when a rude spoilt boy, had, by a gross speech, driven Henry from Farleigh. His ripened understanding made him unable to remember that unlucky moment without blushing; and the weak misjudging mother who had cherished his faults was long since dead. A liberal education, and just turn of thinking, had rendered young Vernon in person, mind, and manners, no less than fortune, a match so entirely unexceptionable for Julia, that she now shed almost as many tears at finding him without a fault, as she formerly did for the consequence of his gross one.

Although Mr. Pembroke knew not how to exert authority in a point so delicate, it was too near his heart, not to induce him to add to his own influence that of Henry. He enlarged on the altered and superior character

character of young Vernon, calling upon the candour of his darling son to dismiss from his mind any little selfish recollection of the boyish quarrel between them, and in his correspondence with Julia to second his father's wish: assuring him that should she be won to accept Vernon, he would find in her husband a brother and a friend infinitely to be respected and valued. "Vernon the husband of Julia!"—discordant was the sound to Henry's ear,—odious the words to his eye: and if she must enrich the hand of some man, did the world afford no one worthy of her but Vernon?—Could his father forget, then, that this youth had first rendered him an exile, an alien from that mansion in which he now insolently sought to dwell, and dwell there the lord of Julia—perhaps her beloved. Spleen, jealousy, a thousand humiliating embittered reflexions crowded into his bleeding heart. The letter of Julia was yet in his hand,—the

seal

seal unbroken:—he paused in trembling anxiety, then threw it disdainfully from him, as if assured that he should there read only a confirmation of the merit, the triumph, the felicity of Vernon, and shrink under the cruel sense of his own insignificance, his isolated state in society. The young mind generally makes the most of its misery before it deigns to doubt whether it has not exceeded. Henry, worn out at length with fretting, suddenly reproached himself with caprice; and, kneeling with tender devotion, took up the rejected packet, and kissed the characters which the fair hand of Julia had traced. Rapidly his eager eye ran over a long letter without once catching the name he detested. Ah, no! the delicate Julia would not wound his sensibility, nor quicken his recollection, by telling him of the pretensions of Vernon. She wrote only of himself,—implored for long letters, a little to enliven the dullness of Farleigh,

which

which grew every day more intolerable now he was out of all possible reach. She added, that a little touch of the gout their father had been seized with, had enabled her to engage a neighbouring physician to order him to Bath; from whence she hoped to persuade him to set out on a tour through Wales, where it was her secret object to discover some romantic solitary abode, like those that they had often imagined together, in which she would, if possible, reside, till he should return crowned with laurels, once more to dwell with them at Farleigh.

And now the soul of Henry overflowed with wild undefinable tenderness. Alone, in the wilds of Canada, he enjoyed a pleasure so perfect, that many a long life has been spent in unlimited indulgence without affording the voluptuary such a moment.— "No, Julia," sighed he, as fancy sobered

into

into reason, " I cannot, dare not return to Farleigh:—born to live *for*, it is not my happy fate to live *with*, you: yet, oh! had it been young Vernon's."—He now resorted to his clarionet; and running imperfectly over the favourite airs of Julia, almost believed he heard her soft applause, when a hoarser voice broke the reverie: " I once, young gentleman, played that instrument better than you do." Henry, something surprised, raised his eyes to a silver-headed surly veteran, nicknamed in the camp the misanthrope. So seldom was the old gentleman's taciturnity broken, that he seemed now only to have transferred it; for Henry gazed on him in silence. " You do not manage your stops well," added the stranger, with more conciliation of tone. " Will you who thus criticise have the goodness to improve me," returned the youth, respectfully tendering the instrument. " How should I play?" gruffly returned the old man;

" do

"do you not see that my right arm is useless." Henry's sympathetic glance atoned for his oversight; and his new friend then more mildly added, "I may put you in a better way for all that."

The stranger did not over-rate his musical skill, for in a very short time Henry, by his advice, touched yet more exquisitely the clarionet. Nor did their intercourse end there: the retreating dignity of the war-worn veteran was calculated to impress a nature like young Pembroke's. "Although you never till now noticed me," said the old man, "I have been hours in the woods listening to you;—your instrument I was once thought to excel on; and music is still," added he, sighing, "my passion—my only passion."—"And I will play whole hours," politely added Henry, "to afford you the pleasure which you can no longer give yourself."

Henry,

Henry, though accustomed to military banter, and equal to returning it, was something surprised at seeing a gay young officer at the mess lift up his hands and eyes when he conveyed a slice of beef to his plate. Unable to interpret this gesture without inquiry, the whole party pleasantly answered him, that they concluded he must have renounced all such gross sinful food, now he was got so great with old Pythagoras.—This could apply only to the lame and interesting veteran; and Henry kept up the subject to learn whatever the young men knew of his history;—it was comprised in a few words. Cary, he understood, had from early youth been an officer, but of a fickle turn and melancholy temper, which had made him often change commissions to see new service; till having from a wound in his right arm lost the use of it, he sold out; and, living contentedly on a very little, had travelled from curiosity almost over the whole world. En-

thusiasm

thusiasm inhabits not the heart while the affections are uncherished; but, destined to form a part of every nature, it then passes into the understanding. A residence of some years in the house of a Bramin on the banks of the Ganges had inured Cary to the pure and simple habits of that sect, insomuch that he no longer tasted animal food, and was said to believe in their doctrine of the metempsychosis. "You have seen his fine spaniels?" said the relater, on concluding his story. "They are too beautiful to be overlooked," returned Henry. "Curse me!" added a raw ensign, "if I don't think the queer codger fancies them his near relations; for he made a devil of a row when I had one of them stolen, and shut up for a couple of days, just to see what old Brama would do when he missed her." Alas! thought Henry, how severe must have been the unknown affliction which has thus bewildered a brain rational in all other instances.

stances. "But the best joke of all," cried another flimsy wit, "is, that the comical put, though he has only one hand, would as soon use that to fire one of us off at the mouth of a cannon as take a pinch of snuff; and what polite reason does he give, think you?—why, he says it may, perhaps, be a kindness, as we shall then get a new form; and we shall have devilish bad luck if we should ever become any thing worse than we now are." At this speech Henry's muscles relaxed unconsciously into a smile, and he felt his partiality for Cary increased.

As soon as the hoary veteran found that a youth universally courted took pleasure in tracing him through solitudes which he rather sought, because he knew not where to meet a congenial mind, than from misanthropy, his harshness of character wholly disappeared. It soon became Henry's generous wish to steal into his confidence, that from

from finding the point whence his reason diverged (for even he thought that it at intervals wandered), he might gradually, perhaps, bring it back to the path of right. Although profoundly silent on the sorrowful past, this tender consideration had a charm for the abstracted Cary, and chance soon cemented to friendship an acquaintance which chance so oddly began. The attachment had the sanction of General Wolfe. He had selected Cary as an engineer, a post for which his long experience eminently qualified him. Often did the friends lean on a cannon, and confer by looks, as the heroic General sought to smile off in social intercourse the heavy weight of the war, so plainly depicted on his ingenuous countenance.

Environed with variety of dangers, and confined to narrow boundaries in the region of sylvan beauty, the impatient English wasted of necessity those precious days that could

could not now be many, in petty skirmishes and vain efforts to bring to a battle that enemy, who, securely entrenched, knew much might be lost, but nothing gained by this measure. The high and valorous spirit of General Wolfe could not brook retreating without a conflict; and every passing hour pressed on him the recollection of that approaching one, when nature, periodically, in Canada locks up all her treasures beneath mountains of snow and masses of ice. With gelid breath she there binds to solidity the impetuous rivers; and for the emulation and envy of proud man, constructs magnificent bridges of materials so frangible, that the sun-beams might annihilate them; over which, for months, pass and repass busy multitudes, utterly regardless of a wonder which they annually witness.

The suffering of mind which allows not of communication, usually preys upon the constitution,

constitution, and General Wolfe was seized with a malady that medicine alone could never cure. It was now only that he could estimate the value of Henry Pembroke's devoted regard; who watched over the important invalid with the spirit of a man, and the softness of a woman: tender remembrances from home at intervals lightened his duty, and the letters of Julia, a thousand times read, still excited in Henry the same delight.

LETTER.

"Castle St. Hilary.

"A little volume from our precious volunteer has been at last sent hither after us. —Henry is well.—Oh! what a weight did this news take from both my father's heart and my own.—I pass over all your masterly and beautiful descriptions of the country, my

my beloved brother, for I can only be interested or entertained when you speak of yourself.

"Ah, Henry! are you still, then, fond of a camp? Have you forgotten us, in the pride of attaching the regard of your glorious commander? Why oblige us alike to adore him? In vain you argue on the impossibility of your safety being risked, while it is the interest of the French to avoid an engagement, and the choice rests with their General, not yours. Rumour, my dear Henry, sad and serious rumour, shows the fallacy of this opinion:—had you a leader of a common character, you would be certainly in no danger; but that many-headed monster the public, without capacity to judge, or information on which to ground judgement, already questions the conduct of your General, and he has too heroic a soul not to prefer glory to life: at least, thus

have

have you taught us to believe;—how, then, can I be at ease?

"Yet I think my restless anxiety is abated, since we got out of the gay scenes of Bath; where my poor father lived through each day only by the expectation of the newspaper of the preceding one; and my very soul was harassed with the insipid conjectures of my pump-room companions, who often lost in the sight of a new face, or a new bonnet, all recollection of Canada and the war.

"Let me however distinguish one among the many, so charming, that my heart made almost a friend of her, and my father's almost a wife.—Nay, start not, my Henry! —our father is only a man, and Lady Trevallyn seems something more than a woman. Made *for*, and a little *by*, the world, the high air of *ton*, and finish of beauty,

 have

have not destroyed the warmth of her heart, or the enchanting *naïveté* of her manners. She has tried hard to make me as fine a lady; but I have still my old trick of blushing, either at my own faults or other people's. I do not accuse her of plotting on my father's heart, observe, for she reigns in too many to make that of a man of his age or condition an acquisition; but I took notice that he never left home when she was with me, which was almost continually; for we lived next door to each other.—The mansion I date from belongs to her, or rather to her son, where she has promised us a visit.—Ah! should fortune send our Henry to us at the same juncture!—why he too would be chained to the car of Lady Trevallyn; and I must thank one of her wild schoolboys for gallanting me about. She is neither too old nor too wise to be entertained with flights of imagination, by vulgar souls ycleped romance; and after I had

drawn

drawn one of my usual pastoral pictures of a Welch retreat, in which I meditated burying both my father and myself, during your absence, she assured me, that Castle St. Hilary was the very dwelling I had by intuition described: save that its antiquity was such, that "were Sampson now alive, and should take any exception either to the building or to the company, a single shake of his would pull it about our ears. The rocks were already so sociable as almost to nod at each other over our heads; and the waterfalls, as incessantly melodious as heart could desire. The anchorites of the mountains were, indeed, rather more numerous than we might like; but, luckily, they went upon four legs; and however magnificent their beards, neither troubled us with their lectures nor their company."—I liked the description, and my father the lady:—a blind bargain was struck between our family stewards; and when our lovely widow,

with other water-fowl, took wing for Weymouth, we sat out on the tour of Wales.

"Pray, did you ever suspect our father of turning author?—or has he newly taken up the idea?—His travels through the Principality, I am convinced, he must design shortly to treat the public with; ornamented with drawings by a young lady, for her own amusement: for had I not taken my port-folio and pencils, I know not how I could have passed the frequent intervals of his absence. With feet still tender, and a gouty cough, never did he espy from the chaise-window a shady dell or winding road, but John was stopped, and he must explore it. A stony brook became as sure an attraction to him as if the nymph of the stream had been braiding her green locks, and waiting for him by appointment at its source. At length we reached this sweet abode—this solitary castle.—Erected, in the eye of fancy,

fancy, as we look up to it from the road, upon the very boundary of creation: one seems with pilgrim devotion to deposit all human cares and follies at the foot of the mountain it stands on, and to seek here a kind of resting-place between earth and heaven; to which it so nearly approaches, that I sometimes fancy I see my guardian spirit, as each neighbourly cloud breaks, and surely breathe something here of celestial peace and purity.

"Had I my beloved Henry for a guide and protector, I would run about these mountains like a chamois, and not leave a spot unvisited. I know not what the charms of Canada may be, but do not think that we need go so far to find all our visions of beauty, and retired felicity, realised.—At least come and journey through Wales with me before you decide.—Let your eye wander here through the rich foliage of the

woods

woods that fill the hollows, then lift them to the grotesque summits so far above you—climb as though you were scaling heaven, and you may then turn to survey the village of St. Hilary and its castle, looking like bee-hives in a garden, while one rude mountain seems to shoulder another, far as the eye can reach,—a sea of green billows fixed into solidity by the fiat of the Almighty.—How the soul feels at once its force and its feebleness in contemplating scenes like this!—the mysterious image of immense power overshadows us, and imperfect humanity can only glorify by silence the Creator of all things, wondering that a mite should have the privilege:—to this spot I always resort when I can reach so far, and, throwing myself upon the turf, conjecture whether my dear Henry sees at the same moment a scene as grand, or feels a sensation as sublime.

"This ancient seat preserves all its family

honours

honours without giving you the idea of any thing frightful or gloomy.—There is a simplicity, a kind of lovely homeliness in its interior, like the heart probably of the builder, who cased that in iron as well as his castle, only against the enemy.—To his friends and his poor both were alike open. The Gothic gates, and uncouth statues in the outer hall, make me expect, every time I enter, a greeting from Prince Llewellyn, or at least Owen Glendower, while other harpings than those of my own hand seem to ring on my ears. A table, like that of King Arthur for size, solidity, and polish, appears in perspective; but we have not yet been so lucky as to encircle it with true knights—even of the shire.

"The gardens, I own, do not please me. Battlements of yew, and fortifications of holly, must always offend taste; and a considerable tract of beautiful land is ornamented

ed with every diversity of verdure, under the daily torture of the shears of the gardener: at the extremity of the pleasure-ground you find the gate of a desolated priory:—pass that, and all is enchantment.—No weeds are to be seen within the sacred inclosure—sweet shrubs and plants have been nurtured in every favourable spot—each mouldering pillar is enwreathed with jasmine—the Gothic fret-work of the windows seems bound together by a treillage of roses and woodbine—the cloisters, yet in tolerable preservation, supply a walk ever dry, and inclose an orangery;—I thought myself in fairy land.—The dear sociable soul who thus has given a charm to ruin, a grace to imperfection, has filled every niche with a comfortable seat, always calculated for two persons.—This silent solemn scene by moonlight is almost too touching for sensibility, while one fancies the fragrant and beautiful flowers are springing from the fair and pure

bosoms of nuns now no longer beating with vain hopes or fears—as mine still does.—Would you think that I should have found another treasure beyond?—but of this I will not speak, that I may have something left to surprise my Henry with when he comes here to visit us—for here till he comes will I stay.—Nay, perhaps I shall not then quit St. Hilary.—Abhorred be Farleigh, while my brother refuses to dwell there!—yet my father bids me enjoin you still to direct your packets to his own seat, as that is the most immediate mode of conveying them to us. Adieu! beloved Henry; remember of what importance you are to your father and your poor Julia; and take care of yourself for our sakes, if not your own."

The conviction this epistle gave Henry, that Julia had determinately rejected the

addresses of Vernon, and sought to seclude from the world those charms that fixed all whom they attracted, was perhaps necessary to invigorate his soul in the approaching trial which called for its utmost energy. —That momentous period was now at hand when the glorious Wolfe had resolved upon conquest or death; nor knew that to him they would be one and the same thing.— The daring enterprise meditated by the hero, comprehended so many various exertions of human powers, as showed that he relied on finding in each fellow-soldier a nature like his own; and Wolfe well knew how to impart his native enthusiasm. When the solemn hour of embarkation came, the troops ascended the boats appointed to fall down the river St. Lawrence, with the firm step of valour and of virtue—Each eye, having first besought its God, was turned with awe and admiration towards the dauntless leader, who, with circumspect mien,

but sublime determination, marshaled the silent soldiery. Henry Pembroke stood near him, and had the envied honour of being ordered to do so in the field of battle.

Day closed ere the little flota launched upon the rapid tide, which, to each thoughtful mind, seemed to carry forward the freight like time rolling onward to eternity. The stars, alone more silent than the troops, shone with a pure radiance peculiar to the cold atmosphere. The winds, now rushing through impending woods of growth immemorial, which cast their deep shadow on the water, seemed like a furious host of congregating foes, and now lost behind the rocky heights, nature's proud bastions, which the floating troops were soon to scale, allowed them in passing to hear the careless whistling of unsuspicious centinels, who were not warned, even by a whisper, that an enemy was at hand.

How

How glorious, how triumphant was the landing of the English, though fierce and desperate the conflict! Impatient in the dreadful onset for artillery, General Wolfe commanded Pembroke to fly to the pass, where, by exertions almost beyond human strength or skill, the seamen were drawing the cannon up the precipices, and urge the engineers to point it. Hardly had Henry repeated this order to Cary, ere the fusee of an Indian, enlisted in the cause of France, laid the youth at the feet of his friend. In the fate of an army an individual is usually forgotten, and Pembroke had been trodden instantaneously to death, but that Cary caught up his body, and throwing it over the only cannon, called to the spirited tars who were on the point of descending, in a voice of thunder, to save the brave volunteer, the favourite of the General. They halted a moment; then, with an adroitness peculiar to themselves, interlaced the slings

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by which the artillery had been dragged up, and laying the bleeding Henry in this rough cradle, rushed down the rocks, impatient to renew their vigorous efforts for their country's service. A young midshipman, who was stationed on the river, received the apparently lifeless charge from the sailors; but, as he dared not quit his post, Henry must have bled to death, had not the elder brother of the little officer been led by affection to share his danger: no rigid duty interfered in his bosom with that of humanity; and on hearing the name of the sufferer, he hastened with him to the camp.

One universal burst of joy, of sorrow, of generous ennobling tears, ran through England at the news of the conquest of Canada,—at the death of its conqueror:—in vain was the rich territory gained, in vain an army preserved;—Wolfe, even in the arms of victory, had fallen, and each man seemed

to lose in him a son—a brother—a friend: —ah! each had lost perhaps even more, when the adored object of national gratitude lived not to enjoy its rapturous effusions.

News like this everywhere out-ran the post, and soon was known even at the remote Castle of St. Hilary. The generous tears with which Mr. Pembroke and Julia embalmed the lost hero were strangely blended with uncertain alarm for Henry: but the newspaper was not come. It at length arrived, but gave no relief to the anxious readers. The post, however, would end their fears:—it followed, but brought no letter:—a second came, but not a line did it convey. Silent though ungovernable anguish seized at once on Mr. Pembroke and his daughter; but the mutual misery burst into words as well as tears, when he proposed posting to London for intelligence. The fragile Julia instantly lost all feeling for herself,

herself, and travelled night and day with her father, who hastened to the war-office, where he understood that Henry, being a volunteer, had not been necessarily included in the return of the killed and wounded; though that one fate or the other had been his was indubitable. The distracted Mr. Pembroke could hope for further intelligence only from the officer who brought home the dispatches:—that gentleman, however, recollected nothing more than having seen the youth at the side of the General at the onset. A pre-eminence so glorious Mr. Pembroke immediately felt might easily become fatal, nor wondered that Henry was overlooked when Wolfe expired; though, under other circumstances, his wounds might not have been mortal.

Oh! that Julia, when this heart-rending account reached her, could have taken wing and crossed the seas to Canada: then would

she

she have explored every bloody spot of the well-fought field, nor once have rested till, living or dead, she had found her beloved brother. Her afflicted soul now imaged him for ever exposed to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, till grief was wrought up in her to its highest pitch by the accumulation of horror.

Yet not to its highest pitch was it wrought up in Julia, for she knew not self-reproach—that was the portion of her disconsolate father; who too late bewailed having appropriated a blessing which heaven had bestowed on other parents, without being content with the precious one it gave exclusively to himself.

To the inhabitants of Castle St. Hilary a sad and uncheered winter commenced. Not one of all the inquiries concerning Henry ever produced the smallest information; and therefore

therefore those who loved him were destined long to endure every misery of conjecture, unrelieved by hope. It had been Mr. Pembroke's earnest wish to return to his own house; but the bare mention of Farleigh always threw Julia into an agony of grief; for there still to her eyes stood the dear insulted indignant boy, as at the moment when he was driven from that happy home, only to seek in another country an untimely grave.

From Farleigh, however, at length was forwarded a box, that the ship-marks showed to have come from Canada. The sight of it only renewed the lamentations of Mr. Pembroke and his daughter. Ah! what could a box bring them? save the loathed uniform of the lost Henry, or those various treasured trifles so endeared by remembrance, that only with life we resign them. Painful as must be the certainty, doubt, however,

ever, could not be endured. Some rich furs, and a letter in an unknown hand, were all the contents of the box. With trembling impatience Mr. Pembroke tore open the letter, while Julia turned away, that he might not observe how she sickened at the signature of Vernon. Yet even the slightest glance had carried to her heart a doubt, a joyful doubt, that once more drew her eye to the packet. Had she indeed seen there the name of Henry?—Ah! too surely her sense had not deceived her:—at once the paper, so lately abhorred, became dear—invaluable. It told her that Henry yet lived, and lived by the generous cares of Vernon. Words never spoke the gratitude that now throbbed at the heart of Julia. She raised her white hand in rapture to heaven, and had the luckless lover been his own reporter, freely, gladly, would she have allowed that hand to drop into his, and have thought the much-desired blessing

too

too poor, too trivial an acknowledgement of such a service.

The long silence of Vernon he excused by relating the deplorable state of Henry, who had been but very recently pronounced out of danger; and such had become, even while he was writing, the severity of the season, as to make it quite uncertain whether he could put this letter into any channel by which he might lighten the sufferings of the family at Farleigh. His best chance was by committing it to an Indian, who knew how in the coldest weather to perform his periodical perambulations; and if the savage executed his trust well, Miss Pembroke would with this news receive some rich furs, which he entreated her to wear as a mark of his devoted respect. He slightly hinted that her rejection alone could have made him quit England; which he did in company with his younger brother, then

first sent into service, in a frigate which their particular friend commanded. When he knew that it was destined for Canada, he the more readily embarked, as he always had the vanity to fancy that could he meet the gallant son of Mr. Pembroke, he should find means to gain that friendship which he had long since learnt to value. They had indeed met—but how?—In the tumults of the attack at Quebec, while he was standing by his brother, the young volunteer was in a moment laid at his feet, drowned in blood, and without a sign of life. Humanity alone would have claimed the exertions which sympathy quickened. Great, however, was the difficulty of getting the youth conveyed to the English camp, nor, when that was accomplished, could he command the assistance of a single surgeon, who were all on appointed duty. During this anxious interval, the blood of Henry continued to flow, till every vein was exhausted. It was then

then found that the ball had entered at the right shoulder, and, as the arm was extended, had torn its way through, till at the elbow it was apprehended to have touched the bone, and the surgeon was urgent for amputation. Vernon's opposition prevented this, and eventually saved the arm of Henry; but the effusion of blood caused a low and tedious fever, producing a dangerous degree of weakness, and a continual wandering of intellect, though his voice was almost too feeble for utterance. The memorable and immediate conquest of Canada gave the whole army those comforts which they must soon have grievously wanted; but so alarming was the state of young Pembroke, that nothing but the severity of the season could have warranted the removing him to Quebec. At length that became the least of two dangers; and having the aid and concurrence of a respectable friend of the sufferer's, to whom his welfare seemed hardly

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less dear, the lover of Julia had ventured this measure. It had the apprehended consequence of a relapse. The incidental sickness, faintings, fever, and delirium, returned with added violence; nor could they for many days hope that Henry would ever struggle through his sufferings. During this period frost had shut up the river, and left no certain means of communication with England. In his cares, however, was now associated that worthy veteran whom the merit of Henry had bound to him, and who was always, when reason reigned, recognised by the eyes of the youth with peculiar pleasure; which had become a great relief to Vernon himself, as his brother had unfortunately taken the measles at Montreal, and he was obliged either to leave the orphan whom his parents' dying injunctions had given to his care at the mercy of strangers, or commit Henry to the charge of his venerable friend Cary. He had yielded to the

most pressing duty, and was now setting out on a dangerous journey; having made every possible provision for the welfare of Henry, whom Cary had promised never to leave. He concluded with giving the address of that gentleman, whom he exhorted Mr. Pembroke to correspond with as an old friend. With affectionate wishes for the return of Henry to England, he hinted a hope that, whenever the youth should learn the name of his preserver, Julia would deign to use her influence with her beloved brother to accept those cares as a small atonement for that error of his boyish days, which he could never recollect without blushing.

"And now our Henry has surely had enough of war!" sighed Mr. Pembroke, as he folded the letter:—"enough too has he won of honour: and if ever, my Julia, our arms again enfold the wanderer, hard shall he find it to escape them. This noble Cary too!

too!—how will my girl recompense him, and young Vernon?" "By loving one half as well as I do you, and the other half as well as my Henry," said Julia, pressing her cheek against her father's.—"Only *half* as well, my Julia?" urged the generous parent. —Julia sighed, but gave no other reply.

Several letters, fraught with the same happy intelligence, that had been sent by different channels, reached, in the course of a few months, Castle St. Hilary. At length one from Cary informed Mr. Pembroke, that though Henry's wound was nearly healed, either that, or some unknown cause, had produced such a delicacy in the habit of the youth as threatened a consumption; in consequence of which the physician had ordered him to hasten into the milder air of his own country. A letter of the same date from Henry himself, however, spoke not of any malady; but breathed a spirit of de- spondency,

spondency, the more alarming, as it seemed impossible for Mr. Pembroke to trace it to any cause. The soul of Julia impulsively assigned the true one: and when she urged her brother by every power which affection holds or gives to hasten home, she delicately insinuated that Vernon was not in England, and that the gates of St. Hilary were still closed on lovers of every description.

It was but too true, that as the wound in his arm closed, that in the heart of Henry became empoisoned. As soon as he had power to converse, the grateful sensibility of his nature led him to inquire whither the gentle assiduous stranger to whom he felt so much indebted had vanished, and who he was. The warmth of Cary's heart threw him off his guard; and although it had been Vernon's express request to have his name concealed, lest it might revive painful recollections in the mind of the sufferer, Cary

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not only declared that, but was lavish on the merits of the man by whose generous exertions alone, Henry had lived to make the inquiry. That youth felt as though again struck to the ground. A thousand times he bewailed the ineffective aim of the ambushed Indian; which allowed him to survive one wound, only to precipitate him to the grave by another not the less mortal because unseen. Vernon appeared to him the chosen favourite of heaven, since he was thus permitted to crush with obligation the wretch who first through his means knew misery. Well could the unfortunate youth calculate the hopes that this hitherto rejected lover would be entitled to cherish; for had he not even in Julia's eyes now fully extenuated his boyish offence? Alas! might not even he himself be called upon to ratify, approve, the lover's claim, detail virtues which he could not deny, amplify those kindnesses it was death to him to have received,

ceived, echo every plaudit of an admiring circle, and, finally, be obliged to witness the union odious to his idea, but to which it was impossible he should object: for he, even he, felt that Vernon had deserved Julia.—While the unspeakable sorrow took these painful forms in the bosom of Henry, he would often in silent agony throw himself upon the ground, and tear the hair in handfuls from his head: giving Cary the dreadful apprehension that his intellects were failing. A thousand times did that friend entreat him to unfold the cause of these horrible transports. A thousand times did he claim a generous, an unlimited participation of this inexplicable anguish: but, alas! it was among the exquisite miseries of Henry that he could not disclose them. This stifled jealousy soon dried up every soft sluice of affection, and with corrosive power eat into the very heart of the unrecovered youth—a deadly canker on the fairest fruit of humanity.

manity. His long fits of melancholy abstraction were now only broken by convulsive starts and internal struggles, which made his eyes shoot fierce and furious glances on mere vacancy. But nature cannot long endure such suffering without showing its effect; and those cheeks, on which health had promised once more to spread her roses, now daily became more and more hollow and pallid, even to ghastliness. Short shivering sighs alone indicated that he breathed, and the gloomy languor of his half-closed eyes showed how seldom they knew the renovating blessing of repose. It grieved poor Cary to the heart to watch the daily desolation of such a fine creature; and to know that there must be some deep-seated cause, both from the suddenness and rapidity of his decline: yet he remitted not in his efforts to obtain the confidence he almost dreaded. Devoured as Henry's spirits were by cruel recollections and name-

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less fears, he was yet open to the impressions of sympathy: and conceiving some communication to be due to such unwearied kindness, he tried to mislead his anxious friend by a partial one. He ventured one day to disclose the least of his griefs in the mortifying story of his obscure birth; which left him through life at the mercy of the world, or rather the victim of its cruel prejudice: while he had neither acceptation in it, fortune, nor those ties of affinity more dear than all. "And causes an evil light as this a grief so mighty," cried Cary, keenly turning on him eyes that struck through his soul a reverential sense of suffering and of sorrow which he had never known before. "Oh world! thou maze of never-ending wonder! thou wilderness of still-shooting calamity, how various, how complicated, how fanciful are thy woes! This boy here, indulged almost beyond his wishes, holds himself licensed to groan, and rend

rend his hair only because he wants thy empty title to those blessings which he can accept or reject at his pleasure! Ah! what then should I do?—might I not be sanctioned in still scattering these grey locks on the winds of heaven, and drenching even yet the earth with the tears of these withered eyes, so long only fountains of sorrow, when I call to mind—" a deep convulsive sigh suspended speech in the veteran.

There is something so impressive in the grief of advanced life, if the suffering mind soars to dignity, that those yet younger, awed into silence, hastily gather back into their own inexperienced bosoms each little selfish complaint, and almost blush to have ventured any. Henry felt this powerfully; and, in turn, became the supplicant for confidence and unreserve.

"Long, long, and many are the years," sighed

sighed the agitated Cary, "since these lips were unsealed to mortal man; and why should they now be so? No, it is not possible for me to unfold my fate even to you— yet let the impression of recollected misery which thus shakes me, teach you, young man, no longer to magnify those little present evils, that you may hereafter find to be but the lightest links in the vast chain of human calamity which encircles the earth, and may one day enthral each faculty of your soul. It is not what we inherit, but what we lose: you might have had all, all you wish, and been at last as very a wretch as I am. Fond parents,—lineal honours,— ample fortunes,—the wife whom I adored, —offspring no less lovely,—did heaven in lavish bounty bestow on me; yet here I stand impoverished of all these blessings, single in creation,—uninterested in the fluctuating multitudes by whom I am surrounded,—uninteresting to them. Whether these

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bones shall be inurned in the proud vault of my forefathers, or whiten on the plains of Canada, no one knows, no one cares.—Yes!—you, perhaps, would give them decent burial; and these faithful animals," concluded he, pointing to the two beautiful spaniels affectionately couching at his feet, "with an attachment unknown to sophisticated man, would, perhaps, stretch themselves in death on the grave of him who fed—who loved them."

When grief loses sight of its greater objects, and retreats either into self, or such as are inferior, it may be wrought to disclosure. Henry seized with animated sympathy the occasion, and at length conquered the repugnance which his friend expressed to descanting on a story he had already briefly capitulated.

"When I consider the great bond and duties

duties of morality," sighed the dignified old man, "I own I ought not to hesitate—selfish is the navigator who burns the chart of his voyage, when so many must doubtfully follow the same course. From the errors of my life may you, Pembroke, learn discretion—from its miseries a patient endurance of your own appointed lot. Yet there are things I must detail which it is agony to think of:—let your generous glowing heart give proportionate value to the confidence.

"I am the son of a baronet, who was the head of an ancient family, and the sole heir of an entailed, and ample estate. My father, unhappily, had not known the advantage of a liberal education, nor could he be persuaded that it was essential to a gentleman. Among the causes of his aversion to literature was a love of money ill suited to his condition in life; but thrift is a common fault, I believe, in uncultivated

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minds, which seek a poor occupation (for man cannot live without some) in petty calculations. My mother, having no other child, could not endure to part with me; and therefore valued herself on saving my father's cash by taking upon herself to instruct me in my native tongue. By their mutual care I was so consummate a blockhead at nine years old that I could hardly read a chapter in the Bible. In this happy state of ignorance I should probably have grown up, could my mother have kept me always at her apron-string; but I was now too stout for her to manage, and too cunning to impart to her how I passed the intervals of absence. A narrow escape which I shortly after had of breaking my neck, by riding a vicious horse, without bridle or saddle, put it out of all doubt that to some controul I must be subjected. My father, with his usual parsimony, only calculated where I could get most learning for least money;

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and my mother, how she could keep me near enough to cocker me constantly with cates, and have me home every Sunday. At length it occurred to them both that our worthy clergyman might be a most excellent preceptor if he would take me to board, as he was blest with a son two years younger than I was, whom his care had already made the best scholar in the country.

"Cramped circumstances, and clerical dependence, are never so severely felt as when they subject persons of merit to such troublesome incumbrances as I must necessarily have proved: yet the excellent man was obliged to receive the compliments of his neighbours on the honour of being intrusted with the young 'squire. When I recollect, among a hundred ways I had of being irksome, the daintiness of my appetite, which taxed the good people's circumstances to supply their table with delicacies for me that

they denied to themselves, I wonder they did not hate me.—Study I soon found detestable; and as I was already able to maintain my argument against my father, I did not mind letting my tutor have the best of it; for he was to live by his learning, and I by the wisdom and œconomy of my progenitors. Seldom came the day that a worthless gamekeeper, to hide his own depredations under those imputed to the young 'squire, did not entice me from the parsonage; and its worthy inhabitants were often in a state little short of distraction, lest any accident should have happened to me: so early can self-will and the pride of life reign, where parents fail to rectify both by due government and proper tuition. I should doubtless have grown up an ignorant clown of fortune and family, had my poor mother lived; for never did she fail to intercept the necessary complaints which my tutor sought to convey to Sir Hubert's ear. The mis-

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taken good woman, however, died when I was about twelve years old, and with her I lost a thousand foolish fond indulgences which I heavily missed.—My father now often heard how unruly I was, and seemed, in becoming a free man, to have acquired a new importance in his own eyes. Among the reasons he gave me for "turning over a new leaf," as he termed reformation, was, that, except I amended, though now an only son and heir, I might not always remain so. The latter I however knew to be a mere threat, for every servant, as well as kinsman or friend, had already assured me that I could not lose my inheritance by his having twenty more children. Happily for the peace of my own soul, a change in my conduct was effected by a better motive than the fear of losing a fortune—a conviction of my ignorance. I began to discover that the taste for literature my young friend Llewellyn early displayed, had not only given him an acceptation in society which made

made me blush to take place of him, but diffused through his manners an elegance seldom found in mere scholars, while it tinctured his life with that exquisite power of enjoyment, which a regulated and informed mind, united with a glowing imagination, alone can give. Llewellyn was thought poor, dependent.—No, he was rich —for he was master of himself: and I, the esquire, was poor and dependent, for I had an empty head and an ungovernable temper, which constantly threw me upon the mercy of all around me. The moment in which a young man first discovers his own fault, is the one that determines his character; since he must ultimately sink under that which he does not at once resolve to rise above. I was not, however, too old to redeem lost time; and Llewellyn soon did more for me than his father had ever been able to do: who, good old man, exulted to see me sensible of his son's superiority: but in proportion as I gained my

tutor's affection I lost my father's. His table was often surrounded by illiterate assuming persons, whom even I could confute on a thousand occasions; and though I had now sense enough to speak with modesty, I was soon found guilty by ignorant eldership of being too young to be in the right. Sir Hubert one day bluntly informed me that he expected me to learn, and not to teach; hinting that he had some thoughts of clipping my wings by marrying again. Indeed it shortly after became obvious, that a lady newly widowed had made up her mind that he should do so; but of this I took no note.

"A brother of my mother's, who had passed his youth abroad, and risen in the army to the rank of a general, now came down to spend some time with us: he expressed great astonishment at finding his nephew near six feet high, as well as himself, and still more that he had no profession. As

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he sometimes kindly regretted not having a serjeant with him, who might teach me to move like a gentleman, I took an occasion to show him that the inside of my head made a better figure than its outside; and he was no less suddenly amazed at my knowledge, which to him appeared pre-eminent. His ignorance was of the good-natured kind, which buds forth into wonder; and he really supposed that I should be a phænomenon at college, whither, he insisted, I ought immediately to go; but as he was not much more generous than my father, this admitted of debate. At length they agreed conjointly to squeeze out enough to equip me for, and maintain me at, Oxford: but I had sufficient feeling to languish to share the advantage with Llewellyn. It was almost ruin to his father to engage in such an expense; but the youth had set his mind on academical honours; and the pride of showing this beloved and gifted son to all

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the wise professors, was a temptation that my worthy tutor could not resist: he therefore agreed with his wife to starve their appetites, and feast on the rising fame of their son.

"The General himself conveyed us to Oxford; and there set down two raw striplings never before out of the nest in which they were fledged, to *feel* the world rather than to *see* it. To how many wants did a single week make us sensible! how many wishes grew out of those supplied wants, and how endless soon became both! The known circumstances of my young friend, as well as the right turn of his mind, gave him an advantage over me, in permitting him to limit his expenses; but for the only son of a rich baronet to affect œconomy would have insured to him ridicule and contempt; while the same extravagance would have been produced by fear, instead of frankness of temper. I, however, did not

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act from consideration; but almost withdrawing from the studious Llewellyn, committed my conduct to the guidance of companions who were only less modest, not more judicious than myself; by whose advice I so fully profited, that in a year I amassed a list of bills as long as my father's rent-roll, and incurred a censure from the Vice-chancellor. I now was compelled a little to reflect, and the affectionate Llewellyn would, no doubt, have suggested some method to retrieve my imprudence, had I not been ashamed to consult one whose virtue tacitly reproved me: and, "what does he know of life?" was the cry of all my inconsiderate associates. When I imparted to them my distress, they shouted with laughter. Was I not an only child, and therefore the heir of my mother's fortune, no less than of my father's entailed estates? The young spendthrifts had a copious acquaintance among the Jews and money-brokers in London. By their recommendation

dation I drove up my new curricle thither, and found that so much admired, the town so agreeable, and the sons of Israel so accommodating, that my visits to London more than once made me in danger of expulsion at college. At the time when I ought to have finished my education, I had not one penny left of my poor mother's portion. To bury the sense of chagrin, and go off in a blaze, I gave a dinner at the Thatched-House to all the Cantabs of my acquaintance, and from thence adjourned half-drunk to a masquerade, where I was soon found out and surrounded by a bevy of light ladies, among whom I had a very large acquaintance. Before us we saw a stalking figure of Guy Vaux, prying into every corner:—he took my fancy, and I began to hunt and quiz him. He suddenly stopped, raised his little dark lantern, and turning the light full on my face first, from whence I had taken the mask to cool myself, removed his vizor,

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and whisked it round to his own. I beheld my uncle the General, and became sober in a moment. Here ended my town career, and many a sour lecture followed: though I really think his telling me that he first knew me by my inveterate country tone vexed me more than his informing my father of all my follies, who abruptly recalled me.

"Impoverished of what fortune I could call my own during my father's life, humbled and disgraced, I returned to a home not more endeared by the daily lectures I had incurred for living an idle life, when I had never known a profession or employment. A large demand on Sir Hubert, from some of my accommodating London money-brokers, incensed him to the extreme. He flatly refused to pay a guinea for me, and bade the hardest of wretches do their worst; which was in reality consigning me at two-

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and-twenty to the King's-Bench and ignominy. I remonstrated, entreated, promised in vain. He saw in imagination all his coffers plundered, and his old oaks levelled; and solemnly swore that I should learn by want the value of both. After a little time, he, however, cooled, and made me a proposal which riper years and more observation would have guarded me from listening to, but which, at my time of life, and under such a pressure of circumstances, was readily accepted:—it was to join with him in cutting off the entail: not that, he said, he should eventually deprive me of my birthright, nor, as I was an only child, did it appear likely; but that I should by this step put it out of my own power, either by early intemperance or extravagance, to let myself be plundered of my patrimony. The plea was, though arbitrary, fatherly and prudent; the sum offered, more than enough to relieve my feelings, by acquitting me to every creditor.

ditor. The lawyers went to work, and the entail was regularly docked.

"The lightness of heart which followed the payment of my debts was, however, something damped by seeing my father appear openly as a wooer of the widow lady whom I formerly mentioned. In fact, I had soon reason to apprehend that the late measure was suggested by her as a preliminary to her marriage; as it would secure to her children, should she bear Sir Hubert any, by the influence she might obtain, the rights of eldership. I felt all my own indiscretion, but I uttered not a word; and soon saw a second bride take the place of my poor mother, who bore not the least resemblance to her: proud, vain, selfish, and ill-tempered to all but her husband, the new wife understood well how to manage him by an affected fondness, while she vented on me a displeasure which I excited only

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by being my father's son. My first severe blow in life now fell on me. I felt that I was sunk to insignificance by my own faults merely; and to complete them, had assigned away, like Esau, my birthright for a mess of pottage; but I had not, like him, the heart and blessing of my father. My step-mother became with child, and Sir Hubert doubled his idolatry. The coldness of both consequently increased to me; and even the domestics, by an utter inattention to my orders, showed that they understood me to remain only on sufferance in the mansion of my fathers; where empty pockets seemed to threaten me with eternal humiliation. How long I could have borne this situation I know not; but on representing it in part to my uncle the General, he sent me a commission in the army; bidding me come up to him, and leave Sir Hubert to enjoy at full his delectable fit of dotage: he concluded with some of his usual harsh, coarse comments on my follies which had given

given my father an excuse for a second marriage. Before I left home I saw a sister added to our family; and observed that her sex had been a severe disappointment to both parents.—It seemed a little to turn Sir Hubert's affections again towards me; for he assured me on parting, that the future still depended on myself, nor would the dear little stranger cause any material alteration in his views, if I from that time behaved with prudence, honour, and feeling. Thus, however, did not my uncle and I part; for when he found that I had put it in the power of a second wife to step between me and the estate unalienably mine, had I been but rationally selfish, he became outrageous with passion, and gross in his expression of it:—he at once abjured me as a spendthrift, and ridiculed me as a fool. In taking leave of England for Minorca I had, therefore, the pleasant conviction that it contained not one human being who cared if I ever returned to it or

not,

not, and hardly one whom I on my own part wished again to see.

"The impressions of youth are, however, naturally as versatile as impetuous. New scenes and new objects easily dissipate painful remembrances. My present profession and associates pleased and amused me. The garrison, though limited as to numbers, was in a healthy situation, and the officers were men who had mostly seen service, and learnt discretion. I loved music, and studied it; passing my time agreeably enough, till the regiment was ordered to the West Indies. Though my pay was certainly too little to maintain a gentleman, I always found it very difficult to wring from Sir Hubert's gripe those remittances that were indispensable; and had only one consolation for present inconveniences; that I had never said or done, since we parted, aught that my father could construe into an offence; and my lady-mother

ther luckily had never borne him another child. The change of climate soon brought on me that desperate fever which often rages in the islands, and is so fatal to Europeans: it very nearly left Sir Hubert without an heir. I was a whole year recovering: my pecuniary demands, of course, became greater; and whether my father distrusted my accounts of a sickness so lingering, or his wife stood between him and humanity, I know not, but I often felt the pressure of poverty in a degree which he ought never to have suffered his son to have experienced; and which might again have driven me to desperate or mean resources, had I not profited so far by my past errors and follies as to endure patiently. Yet the evil hour sometimes comes upon us, however wary we think ourselves; and a single one finished my ruin. The liquor of the country always inflamed me almost to madness; and having, in some dissipated company at a tavern, exceeded the

little I usually allowed myself, I fell in with a party playing high:—this fatal fever of college came over me. I felt in my pockets, but they were empty, and known to be so. My companions derided my prudence: I no longer knew what I did, when I desperately offered my only stake, and played away my commission. The phrensy of intoxication was succeeded by a misery which I remember even now with horror. I had seconded the arts of my step-mother, authorised the parsimony of my father—in fine, disinherited myself. To complete my tortures, a note was brought me from a military friend, advising me, on the plea of bad health, to request leave of the commanding officer to return home, and immediately to sail in the fleet then under weigh for England; as he was grieved to inform me that I could not appear without a general slight which no individual could, either by resentment or apology, get over; and which would for ever stop my career in the army: though he knew

me

me to be so much beloved, that all the regiment would defend my honour if I went home as sick.

"Sick, indeed, I was—sick of myself—life—every thing—and to what a home was I now to return!—where I had been unwelcome even before I knew myself penny-less, and dishonoured. The tumults of my mind during the memorable voyage never shall I forget. How often was I tempted to bury myself in that tumultuous deep only more perturbed than my own soul; but my cup was not yet full,—much, much of bitter, and one drop of heavenly sweetness yet remained to be poured into it. I turned my unwilling steps towards the house of my father, without daring to apprise him of my arrival, lest he should shut that and his heart alike against me. I discharged the chaise before I came to the last turnpike, dreading the hue and cry of joy which might run before me only to aggravate my humi-

liation

liation and misery. The evening was closing as I passed a thousand well-remembered sports, and persons; but I felt as a ciminal, and, sculking along, knew that my return would gladden no one heart in creation. At length I approached the garden.—Oh, happy spot! where once in innocence and peace I reveled on the present, nor considered the past or future. There once hung my infantine swing between two limes. There once, proud of my boy's apparel, I gaily leapt my poney. There once I saved a frozen beggar, and my mother fondly blest me for it.—I—I—myself was now become a beggar, and who should bless—should save me?—I turned my lonely steps towards the church, and stretching myself upon the vault where that poor mother lay in happy ignorance of my misconduct, I implored heaven, by her sainted spirit, to accept my penitence, and soften the heart of my father. After this sad

oblation

oblation I ventured to present myself at the door: a cry of delight ran through the domestics, who had at that moment forgotten that I was no longer their certain master. Nine years had elapsed since I had set eyes on my father, who was grown by infirmity more than so much older. The dear man was sitting bolstered up in a fit of the gout. I sunk at the feet of the venerable, though harsh, parent, and nature asserted her power in both our hearts, by almost audible pulsations. Hardly could I gain voice enough to murmur out, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son!" This awful address, springing from a true sense of error, carried with it all the force of the following sacred impressions, and disarmed parental wrath:—the feeling became too mighty;—Sir Hubert threw himself on my neck in speechless agitation, and both almost died of the tender pang of re-union.

A thousand

A thousand pious ideas were blended with nature's fond transport; and having called up incidentally all that could operate in my favour, I found my fault, if not overlooked, so lessened, that I had little difficulty in prevailing on Sir Hubert to forgive it. Thus, by true contrition, I suddenly felt, after an interval of so many erring and miserable years, that I had at once recovered virtue and a father.

"A beautiful child was now called; for her mother, most luckily, happened to be abroad on a visit, who, with sweet endearment, entreated me to love Caroline. It seemed impossible to avoid loving so engaging a creature; who, in the innocence of her little heart, called upon papa to admire her 'fine officer-brother,' and, by the involuntary flattery of childhood, led me to believe that there was yet something left in me that the guileless might love.

"This

"This tender reception and generous pardon doubled the tie of nature, by binding my very soul to my father. His lady on returning beheld with astonishment her Caroline upon my knee, entwining her white arms round my neck; while Sir Hubert, with almost equal fondness, surveyed his son and daughter. Accompanied still by the little charmer, who would not part with me, I withdrew, as well to save my own shame, while my father revealed my fault, as to avoid his lady's cold looks, and, perhaps, cutting comments. The last, however, I did not escape; for though he spoke low, and even, I thought, humbly, she replied in a high and acrimonious voice, 'And is all this rejoicing then, Sir Hubert, only because your worthless son has completely disgraced himself, and half ruined you?—Pardon me, if I do not partake so singular an exultation.' By what way could I hope to win a woman like this? Had it been possible, my extra-

vagant

vagant fondness for her daughter must have subdued her enmity. Adored as Caroline was by both her parents, I soon learnt, I think, to love her better than either did; and certainly much more wisely: for I found that she, like myself, had been allowed to run wild in her childhood, and her naturally fine understanding was as uncultivated as her temper was unformed. Sick of the world, and willing to be wholly forgotten by it, I thought now only of indulging a love of literature and music, and of cheering my father's age by my company, while I lightened to him every care. It seemed a generous return for his liberal forgiveness to become the preceptor of Caroline, and the novelty and distinction of the thing took her young fancy; while it bound me to certain daily acquirements of limited knowledge, which I could only instil by first studying. As the little ingenuous heart of the sweet child unfolded itself to the cares

and affections she excited, I found a strange void in my own which I had never till now felt, or at least reflected on. The exquisite delight this little creature gave to us all, rendered me suddenly sensible of the charm of those natural ties by which we impart and double our being. Alas! it was not at large I made this observation; every throb of my heart told me that there existed one woman, and only one, with whom it could realise the fond, fond visions of domestic bliss, now daily floating before my fancy.

"Although Caroline had no governess, I saw in the house a young creature, whom I knew not how to class with the servants: yet she appeared not at our table. This interesting lovely young woman was called Agnes; but the fear of fixing attention on either her or myself made me unwilling to speak of her, even to Caroline, who had the common propensity of children in running

to

to her mother with whatever she heard, while her observation was singularly acute for her years. It was very rarely that I could cast a glance on the lovely Agnes; yet though I reproved my own vanity for the thought, I could not help fancying that her eyes demanded something of me, which her blushes showed she would not claim. Her dress was always of the most common materials, but it was not possible for any thing to look common on Agnes. Her fragile form rose just above the middle size, and was turned with the grace of the Medician Venus. Her arms and throat were of a pure and delicate whiteness. Her dark hair broke in rich curls over her expressive brows; and her large black eyes had a retiring modest charm I never beheld in any other.—Even now," exclaimed Cary, glancing his wild looks intensely forward, "the angel stands before me, with that touching meekness, that bending grace, which might

have

have won the world—as it, alas! did me.—Those beautiful, those modest eyes were further shaded by a large straw hat tied with black. Her vesture was of some soft mourning muslin, which sweetly enfolded her fair form. I looked at Agnes, and wondered no more how my little sister became so amiable and graceful.

"Notwithstanding a certain interest which we silently took in each other, I saw that this charmer would not depart from the respect due to herself; or easily might she have fallen in his way who passed half his life only in looking for her. I grew alert in observing every thing in which she might have but a remote concern; and seeing with what elegance the flowers were daily disposed in the room where I was accustomed to instruct Caroline, I doubted not but that the snowy hands of Agnes gathered and arranged them. I might have waked the lark

from

from that moment, though till now a sluggard. I ambushed myself at peep of day in the flower-garden, and was repaid by seeing Agnes enter it,

More fresh than May herself in blossoms new!

"I had never yet been able to indulge my eyes with looking enough at her. Ah! did they ever look enough? and remained in the green-house till she came there to add a few geraniums to the fragrant contents of her basket, which she nearly dropt at sight of me;—but she recovered her self-command in a moment, and rather received and returned my address as one who was entitled to, and expected it, than as a young creature whom I either pleased or honoured. I hardly knew what to call her, and delicately hinted that her Christian name was already familiar to my lips, but that I had never heard the one I should add to it. 'Is

that

that possible,' cried she, half smiling; but the painful consciousness which suddenly followed of how completely she must be sunk, when her very name was annihilated, and the rosy blush that almost absorbed the starting tears gave a new interest to her delicate beauty. 'Yet am I pleased, Sir,' added she, 'with what severely humbles me; for rather would I know myself without consequence, than conclude a gentleman without feeling: and I own I have not as yet thought that your distinction; since you deigned not to recognise the little play-fellow of your youth, once the object of your indulgent kindness—the sister of your friend Llewellyn.'—The lovely Agnes could not resist the mournful recollection, when a youth so dear to us both was mentioned: 'Ah, Sir!' added she, frankly extending her hand, asking sympathy, 'the loss of that invaluable brother has almost killed us.'

"I knew

"I knew too well that the hopeful son of my tutor had died just as he was on the point of attaining the long looked-for promotion which was to have given affluence as well as honour to his family: and my only reason for omitting to visit the parsonage was a fear that the sight of one brought up with the lamented Llewellyn would revive the bitter sorrow of his parents. I implored the sweet girl to pardon me a stupidity which I could not pardon myself, and reminded her that she was hardly the size of Caroline when I went abroad.—'I remember it well,' returned she; 'but you, Sir, are not grown, though I am: yet you too are altered.—Have you forgotten your expensive parting present of a gold locket with Llewellyn's hair?—I wear it still.' She drew the treasure from the fairest of bosoms, and hallowed it at once with a kiss and a tear.—Envied, envied benedictions both!—'And now, if you indeed have pardoned, tell me your story, my sweet girl.

Llewellyn

Llewellyn would wish it told to the friend of his choice.'—'The short and simple annals of the poor,' returned the enchanting Agnes, drying those eyes that in a moment again overflowed, 'may be comprised in a few words. You, Sir, already know the narrow income of my father, and how many almost necessary indulgences he was always obliged to deny himself that he might give my brother the education both thought so essential. To see Llewellyn's rapid progress, and general estimation, made us all ample amends for domestic privations, and the prospect of his rise in the church gave happy hopes of future affluence. You left me, I remember, running a little wild thing about the house; assisting as I could in family affairs. A sister of my mother's, who had married in Bristol, came to visit us, when I was near twelve years old, and took me back with her, that I might daily attend a neighbouring school, where, by ingenuity and diligence,

gence, I profited more than my family hoped.—I was about fifteen when my aunt became a widow, and her entangled affairs obliged her to send me back to my parents. Limited as had been my means either of observation or improvement, I was struck on returning with the humble style of the home in which I before thought it Paradise to dwell. Hardly could I be convinced that my parents had not contracted those expenses which they, alas! had never any means of extending. I should have found the daily task of lightening my mother's labours a cheerless duty, had not heaven blessed me with a dear fraternal friend in Llewellyn, who, born to sweeten every scene he graced, entered, at the intervals when he could absent himself from college, his father's humble roof with a tender reverence that made all our cares be absorbed in pleasure. Astonished at finding his little sister suddenly sprung up into a young woman, he sounded

the depth of my intellects, and calculated my acquirements. With a fond distinction of the little merits he found in me, he made me insensibly conscious of those I wanted; and he, who was a fountain of knowledge, graciously accommodated himself to my uncultivated capacity. Mutual love soon led us to unbounded confidence; and while he flattered me with softening his soul, I gradually imbibed from it that high spirit of virtue, which, while it enables us to rise above the little evils of this little world, insensibly prepares us for a better.—Felt I now the sting of poverty?—Ah no!—I saw that pleasure was to be found everywhere by the good; and that the mind, cast by contracted circumstances upon itself, throws out wild shoots even in a chilling atmosphere, which can amply supply the loss of those indulgences the sunshine of prosperity only can bestow. My delight was reading; and my dear brother supplied me with such

books

books as he thought would form and fix my taste; making me in his absence write comments on those I then read, which, on his return, he would peruse, delighting to rectify my judgement when it erred, and, if he found it correct, to gratify me with that applause which nurtures every noble faculty of the mind. How blessed were the days we thus passed together!—Had I a sorrow, it was lost in his society—had I a joy, it was doubled by his participation:—but the pure creature of a better world could not long endure to be of this. It is a little more than a year ago that he returned home with a cold and cough upon him which none of us supposed to be dangerous, till the hollows of his youthful cheeks showed the ravage it was making in his constitution. He was permitted to pass the winter at home.—Oh! how long, how dreary did that winter appear, as I watched the wasting of his graceful form! The medical efforts made to re-

move the disease, only, I fear, took from him the strength necessary to encounter it. —As the spring came on we fancied he amended.—What an ecstacy ran through the family !—My father insisted that he had suffered from confinement, and so often urged him to try the air, as to induce his compliance. Never can I forget the day when, as I entered the garden, I saw him feebly come down the walk ! The depredations of the disease were never so visible :— my heart died within me.—On casting his eyes forward, the dear youth perceived me at a little distance, and lifted them to the sun with a wan smile of tender resignation. —Oh God ! what a smile !—it almost killed me. I flew to give him my arm, glad to escape the sight of that face, more precious to me than any thing on earth. Horror was as prevalent as grief whenever from that moment I was obliged to fix my eyes on it : yet if I could hear, without seeing him,

him, his harmonious voice always gave me the sweet familiar pleasure peculiar to family friendships. The desperation of his case was at length past concealment: he alone bore the conviction with fortitude.—Five weeks did I and my poor mother watch with unclosed eyes by his bedside; till at length his celestial spirit exhaled in piety and peace. Heavily, most heavily, we wept—heavily must we ever weep on the grave of Llewellyn! We had now sad leisure to discover that the poverty which my brother's illness had increased, his death had perpetuated. Our pride, our pleasure, our promised affluence, all, all had expired with Llewellyn. Alas! in addition to my share of the general calamity, I had a hoarded portion of my own to groan over in secret.—My companion, friend, instructor, bosom counsellor, was no more! The books we had studied together lay yet around me, but I could only drench them

in my tears. The precepts of this beloved brother I still seemed to hear, but I had no longer voice to repeat, or spirits to apply them. My poor parents began to apprehend that the solitude I indulged in would prey upon my health, and rob their age of its last prop, when my lady, who sometimes visited us, with an air of benevolence proposed, that, to amuse and employ my mind, I should take charge of Miss Caroline. In the universal dejection of the family each sought not, therefore found not, that affectionate sympathy which had heretofore reconciled us to an humble lot. My poor parents too were become painfully sensible that they could not provide for me, should I lose their protection, and that it was wise to accustom me to maintain myself. The offer was therefore accepted, and six months ago I came here as the governess of Miss Caroline.'

"The

"The lovely Agnes suddenly paused; struck with, as I concluded, a delicate consciousness that she could not proceed without shocking my feelings; as the situation in which I found her showed too plainly the fallacy of her parents' expectations. I implored her, however, to pursue her story with frankness; hinting that she could hardly tell me any thing of my lady-mother which would be new or surprising.

"'At my first coming, then, Sir,' resumed the interesting girl, 'I had a thousand lectures given me, both concerning my own conduct and that of your sister, all of which it was not less my inclination than my duty to be governed by: but I know not why, I was never able to convince my lady that I sought to make her will the rule of mine. Miss Caroline too, lovely and innocent, was yet inquisitive and unruly. She continually ran to her mother with a thousand little

tle tales; nor could the dear thoughtless child guess at their cruel consequences to me. I, too, had sometimes occasion to complain of her, for either ridiculing or defying an authority which I rarely exercised, and always with great tenderness: but I had often the mortification to be told, either that the child was in the right, or I had not taken the proper method to amend her fault. It had been premised, ere I entered upon the office, that to dress, work for, and attend to Miss Caroline, should be among my duties: I blush to tell you that those are all now remaining. The servants have long known me to be insensibly levelled with themselves. My parents stipulated that I should dine in the parlour, but my lady, two months ago, informed me how pert the indulgence made Miss Caroline; and that I must dine with her in the room appropriated for teaching. The arrangement did not, however, satisfy my pupil,

who

who soon had influence enough to resume her place in the parlour, but mine was never more allowed me. The additional trouble of supplying me a solitary meal was soon rudely neglected by servants, who, finding me ranked with themselves in all other instances, saw no cause for distinction in this. Thus, by insensible degrees, while anxious to fulfil every duty to God, my parents, and my benefactors, do I find myself a mere superfluity in life—a nonentity—or rather an incumbrance; and long am I likely to remain so, as my lady is willing to escape the odium of sending me back to the dear parents who fondly fancy that I am happy in her favour; nor dare I add to their distress by humbling them yet more with this recital: especially as I well know that Sir Hubert, in the days of my brother's severe sickness, had lent my father a sum which he is unable at present to repay; and it would kill him to bear the weight of an obligation

obligation to the family who could forget that he was a gentleman, no less by birth than profession. In troubling you, Sir, with this detail, I rather sought to awaken your friendship than wound your feelings. Your better judgement and kind heart may, perhaps, enable you to suggest some method of getting me sent home, before any further evil results from a vain experiment.'

"You may guess, my dear Pembroke, from the impression which the lovely Agnes had already made on me, at the effect of this simple yet touching story: but though I promised her my aid, I never attempted to keep my word. I would sooner have parted with my life than the angelic Agnes. —This promise, therefore, only tended to beguile her into confidence and intercourse. —The dislike I ever entertained to my step-mother now arose almost to aversion. Caroline was nearly included in the same feeling;

ing; and since she could set at nought the mild influence of the lovely Agnes, I resolved to make her sensible of one she could not over-rule: but she was naturally gentle, and all her little faults were of her mother's making. The sweetness with which she obeyed me showed that at once, and obtained my fondest affection.

"As it was impossible for me long to appear ignorant either of the residence of Agnes with us, or her name, I foresaw that I should find it very difficult to avoid becoming suspected of a passion for her: but from the moment my heart had found this precious hoard of secret happiness, I knew how to bend it to my purposes. I affected a studious sedentary life; and would hardly see any body, or notice those I saw:—passed almost the whole of my time in the library; and left about, for the eye of the observing, rough copies of translations from several of

the

the Latin poets, which appeared to be the cause of my abstraction. Some few moments, and they were very few, I yet found to offer up my soul's devotion to Agnes; for I no longer affected to second her wish of returning to her parents: and though she still continued to talk of it, I thought, by the hesitation of her voice, that this effort of respect to her family and herself would cost her heart too much to be put in practice.—The very wish gradually died away. The painful humiliation of her present situation she began to endure with more than patience—with the soft endeared submission of silent tenderness. Although she almost lived on air (for dinner I knew she never tasted), she improved in loveliness, by the rich glow and varying graces which the pulsations of the heart ever diffuse incidentally over the person.

"Utterly secluded from a world which I

had

had in my years of vanity been told I well might grace, poor and dependent, my days elapsed in an exquisite trance, which I should have cursed the man who waked me from. Can human life afford an enjoyment comparable to that we feel when we devote ourselves by silent and delicate attentions to the dear object of our choice?—the single being in creation! But if by a peculiarity of circumstances we are able to make those attentions understood by her, while they are inexplicable to the rest of the world, we surely taste the most refined felicity our imperfect nature is capable of knowing.—You are fond of the clarionet:—oh! with what pleasure, on learning my Agnes loved it, did I spend whole months in mastering the instrument: though she could only occasionally catch the notes as she walked in a distant wood with Caroline.

"Sweet, sweet was the labour with my

own

own hands to embellish the spots she was fond of.—How often have I—Oh God!" cried the agitated historian, throwing back the grey locks from his sun-burnt forehead, and lifting his large dark eyes with impressive wildness to heaven, "the very recollection of those days is too mighty for this weak brain—this swelling heart! Agnes,—my angel Agnes, is for ever vanished!—The lovely visions that 'were around her as light,' alike are vanished.—The awful darkness of the soul is fallen upon me! and long have I wandered, long must I wander, alone and benighted, through this busy world. In my widowed bosom," pursued he, drawing from thence a packet sealed with black, which with eastern solemnity he put to his head, his eyes, his lips, and his heart, "be all the remainder of my sad story buried—with my Agnes!"

The animated sympathy and tender consolations

solations of Henry could hardly recal the veteran from the deep reverie into which he then fell; and it was a considerable time ere he resumed his recital.

"A creature gifted like Agnes, with an intuitive sense of decorum, far, far beyond that which is the bond and grace of polished society, no sooner saw my weakness and felt her own, than she nobly made a law for herself, and deprived us both of the pleasure we almost lived on—the sight of each other:—at least all the kindness and confidence that endeared it. This was effected by a very simple means, for she now never separated night nor day from my little sister. Apprised both of Caroline's shrewdness and loquacity, I hardly dared speak to either when together, and vainly studied how to find one without the other. My only chance was that of quitting the dining parlour early; for well I knew Agnes was then a lonely wanderer somewhere, and Caroline

by

by her mother's side, which she never left till cloyed with fruit and sweetmeats. I therefore affected to become more and more deeply absorbed in literary pursuits: often came in with a pen in my hand; and, snatching it up the very moment the cloth was drawn, ran again to the library. This I did long enough to assure myself that no one would follow to interrupt my studies, or rather to discover my absence from them: 'till, convinced that I was considered as a mere bookworm, I one day ventured to explore the whole house and its vicinity, without being able to find my charmer. Not even her own little apartment escaped my search: yet, as if by magic, Agnes daily vanished till Caroline had left her mother. Had I not when a school-boy known every room and closet in my father's mansion, I should have concluded that she had found some secret place in it with which I was unacquainted; but that I was convinced could not be.

"It

"It was just possible for Agnes in this interval to reach the parsonage, and return; and not doubting but that I must find her with her father and mother, I ventured to call upon them even at this unusual hour. —Agnes, however, I saw not; nor could I learn that this was her time for paying them her duty. Almost in despair, I bent my steps again towards home; but perceiving a servant who might mention having met me, I passed, to avoid him, into the church-yard, and was hid by its wall. Suddenly my ear was there greeted, and my soul revived by the sound of an organ, for my mother had bequeathed her own to the church. I approached, and through the door caught the angel voice of Agnes, rising in sad yet sweet accordance. I remained in the porch, and, listening intently, found that it was the funeral anthem and dirge she was performing, to the memory of her beloved brother, there buried:—'If there was any virtue, if

there was any praise, he thought of these things.'—A requiem at once so holy and so tender, 'rapt me in Elysium.'—I ventured not to sully with an earthly love the sacred image impressed at that interesting moment on her pure soul: but daily resorting to the porch, lived on the sound of her heavenly voice; till a monument which I had for some time bespoke should be placed over the grave of Llewellyn. When it arrived, I had, for the time it was fixing up, possession of the church key, which Agnes kept by her father's permission, that she might resort thither and indulge her taste, while she freely practised music. I seized the opportunity to take an impression of the key on wax, and rode many a mile before I ventured to have another made.

"The little mark of respect and friendship which I had shown to Llewellyn offended my father, as another of my romantic

tic and idle extravagances; but it wholly won the generous heart of Agnes. In what brilliant tears did her eyes ever swim when they afterwards met mine! with what melting softness did she address me, even though Caroline was by! how did she pursue with fond regard my very footsteps!

"I waited my opportunity; and one day, while she was divinely touching the organ, I softly opened the church-door, locking it again, and cautiously leaving my key within. I hid myself, till I was convinced by her descending that she was alone. Softly and reverentially she paced up the aisle, and sunk by the grave of her brother in silent prayer: nor for him alone did the angel pray. Sorely she sighed, and, pressing her hand on the purest of human hearts, gave me reason to believe myself included in orisons so touching:—a sigh even more impassioned burst from my bosom: starting, she

turned with terror round, and felt relieved on seeing only me. 'Rise not, my Agnes,' cried I, sinking alike on my knee, 'nor let one fear disturb you,—a fiend alone could give you any: see not in this unauthorised intrusion aught but the fond wish for your society which militates only against a mere decorum, nor dares offend your purity.—Here, before the altar of God, kneeling upon the tomb of your brother, I swear—solemnly—deliberately swear, never to give you a pain which I can spare you—never to tinge that lovely cheek with a blush for any fault of mine.' She regarded me with a dignified silent seriousness, implying belief; and stretching out my hand, with her own yet linked in it, towards the altar, she accepted the vow, and bent to heaven to confirm it. 'Nor is this,' added I, 'the only vow I mean to pledge to you, my Agnes:—here, here, I once more swear to give my hand to her who holds it—to my Llew-

ellyn's

ellyn's lovely sister—to Agnes only.' A beautiful flush rose to her cheeks, but I had ratified this vow on her lips, ere she had recollection enough to reject it.

"Thus in a church was the soft silence of our love first broken,—in a church was it daily confirmed. What precious hours did we steal to pass at the grave of Llewellyn; with an innocence which his disembodied spirit might have witnessed, and a delight well worthy of it. The ruin but too probably attached to my marrying Agnes, made her inexorable to my entreaties; while the advanced years and increasing infirmities of my father rendered it likely that I should soon be master of my own resolutions.—But what young heart can live upon the cold uncertain future?—I was persuaded that we might venture a private marriage; and the caution which we had hitherto observed would sufficiently guard us from suspicion.

Agnes shrunk from the idea; and even if I dared judge for myself, and act independently of my father, so would not she.—Obedient, even in thought, to those who gave her being, she resolutely refused to marry without her parents' consent; and that, she assured me, I should find not less hard to obtain than the approbation of Sir Hubert. I was too much bent, however, on calling her entirely my own, not to revolve all possible ways of inclining the venerable pastor to my purpose; till a bold and desperate project occurred, which I ventured not to impart to Agnes; yet deliberately resolved to risk. I affirmed to her that her own father should marry us secretly. She treated this as a mere banter, but knew not what to make of the determination of my manner. I exacted nothing more of her than a promise not to visit home till she should be summoned thither; and, with a confidence for which she could not account,

account, assured her that summons should call her to church as my bride. Confused, perplexed, and anxious, she gave me the promise I required; but knew little comfort while so uncertain a plan was in agitation.

"I now resorted daily to the parsonage; with a look so self-reproaching and disconsolate, that the good man became very urgent with me to impart its cause. When I had sufficiently awakened his sympathy, I ventured to hint a passion that I had cherished to desperation, but I named not the object;—his pale and trembling looks told me I need not. He greatly did his duty, by exhorting me to forget the object, however lovely, or amiable, so ill suited to me in fortune. I interrupted him by declaring that I was incapable of such a base desertion. I owned myself already wedded—irrevocably bound by ties of honour which the church might confirm, but could not cancel.

cancel. He lifted his trembling hands to heaven, 'And the unhappy girl has yielded?' sighed the tender father; I remained silent; but soon passionately sinking at his feet, conjured him to remember that the secret rested in his own bosom; for Agnes was my wife if he would only give her to me. Shame, pride, and piety, struggled severely at his heart; but our agitation, and high tone, soon added a third person to the party too delicately alive to female honour or disgrace not to side with me:—I mean the mother of my angel. Our joint entreaties at length wrought upon the worthy man, and he consented to marry me privately to his daughter. Oh! cruel state of woman in society, when a mother was compelled to consider that act as honourable which, had the fault been real, would only have been the poorest kind of reparation. I blushed to be treated with tearful gratitude by the matron whom I had thus wounded.

"It

"It was, however, almost impossible to prevail on the offended father to address one line to the child whom he thought so culpable; but I assured him that unless he did, he would never see her more. At length, with bursts of mingled shame and sorrow, he snatched a pen, and wrote,—'Meet me at the altar—at the altar only can I meet you.'—I caught the pen from his hand, nor would allow another word to be added. Hardly could I controul the fond, the glowing exultation of my heart in having thus insured its only wish. The distress of the parents I knew to be temporary, and imaginary,—the happiness which I had thus gained long and exquisite.

"Agnes looked now on me, and now on the billet, in mute wonder; hardly crediting the hand to be her father's: but the transports of my joy were a full confirmation.

tion. A moment's reflexion proved that I could neither have will nor power to deceive her; and I soon had the exquisite delight of seeing her young heart participate the sweet perturbation of mine at our approaching union.

"I wrote to implore the anxious parents not to betray my confidence by one unkind look at their daughter; and named the day and hour, when with the clerk, and one faithful, though humble, friend of their own choosing, they should expect us in the church. I had consented that my Agnes should return, when once married, to pass the day at my father's; and in the evening return to the parsonage. I was waiting for my lovely fluttered girl in the porch of the church; and her father stood ready at the altar, with his book, and surplice on. The sad solemnity of his greeting shocked and surprised Agnes. Conscious as she was through

her

her whole life only of virtue and filial reverence, she could not account for the stern and chilling air with which he went through the awful service. The floods of tears that fell from her mother's eyes had not the same effect, for her own flowed abundantly. The benediction of both parents, which followed that of heaven, was faintly and imperfectly bestowed on her; while to me it became cordial and animated. The father then hastened to depart, as having, by a powerful effort over himself, got through a painful duty; and my beauteous Agnes, hurt and appalled she knew not why, trembling, and alone, retrod the steps that brought her.

"Oh! think what a lingering day of torture remained to us both;—to be in one house, yet wholly estranged from each other: to have gained severally the treasure above valuation without daring to avow its possession! The sun, that I more than once imagined

imagined a second time stood still, at length sunk in the west, and the day finally closed. Caroline's tongue, which I thought would never cease, was at length silenced by sleep. I walked in the wood beyond the garden, till the lover's friend, a bright moon, showed my timid lovely bride, softly closing the small gate upon herself. I sprang forward to claim her as my own, and folded her to a heart as entirely hers now as at that blessed moment. When she spoke to me of her father's wrathful looks in the morning, I enjoyed the pure felicity which I was going at once to dispense and to feel; and opening the jasmine-covered wicket of the parsonage, I sank with my Agnes at the feet of her humbled and afflicted parents. Imploring them to pardon the only artifice by which I could have won their sanction to our union, I bade them fold to their virtuous bosoms a daughter as pure as when she was first pressed there.—Oh! what a

tearful

tearful joy was theirs at this blessed assurance! my fault was forgotten, more than forgotten—hallowed by their bursts of grateful affection. Agnes, again astonished, sought, by turns, in the eyes of each, an explanation. When she comprehended at length the artifice I had adopted, never did she appear so transcendently lovely as while her looks reproved her parents for believing me, and her blushes so sweetly vindicated her own purity. The world affords not four such happy beings as encircled that little table, though on it was only 'a feast of herbs.'—The father's hand had given me Agnes in the morning; the matron hand of her chaste mother now bestowed her for ever on the happiest of mankind.

" How little may constitute felicity to tender hearts you will judge, when I tell you that mine knew no drawback save a fond desire I had to see my Agnes released from subordination,

subordination, and elevated to her own place in society: but she bore the inconveniences of her subjected state with a meekness so noble, that it doubled my adoration, while the sweet mystery of our marriage gave to the wife all the charms which fear and anxiety bestow on her whom we are impatient to make so. What, under other circumstances, we should have thought a misfortune, we were now obliged to consider as a blessing, for, after a while, we saw no prospect of becoming parents.

"The contented manner in which I had appeared to sit down for life at home, was, however, not very satisfactory to my lady-mother; who saw, with deep chagrin, that Sir Hubert, as his years and infirmities increased, turned over to me all his correspondences, accounts, and whatever claimed exertion either of body or mind. Her own mean selfish temper made her incapable of hoping

hoping to find generosity from the heir should heaven suddenly recal my father; and she determined to keep the power wholly in her own hands, by once more driving me from my peaceful harbour into that world where I had been wrecked already. How she wrought upon my father, who certainly had no mind to part with me, to be at the expense of another commission, I know not,—the first word I heard of the matter was its being put into my hand. Sentence of death could hardly have shocked me more.—By some previous prejudice, Sir Hubert construed my visible repugnance to leave home into want of manly spirit; and briefly informed me, that infamy in the army, and contempt among my friends, must follow my declining the purchase he had made for me. I remained almost in a state of distraction, and avoided an immediate decision. My wife became my consoler; she tenderly urged my compliance, though it must leave her unprotect-

ed, save by her infirm and humble parents. The dread of exasperating Sir Hubert, and aiding the dark machinations of my step-mother, who evidently wished to get me disinherited, which must plunge my sweet Agnes in eternal poverty, alone induced me to hesitate. I was no sooner found to do that, than volleys of letters came every day, either to Sir Hubert, or myself, from all our meddling relations; insisting upon it that my resuming my station in the army, now in actual service, and showing my courage, could alone retrieve the reputation I had lost in the West Indies: where it was hinted that I was spoken of rather as a poltroon than a spendthrift.

" This ignominious representation roused every particle of man in me, and in an evil hour I accepted the commission: though to have driven a plough upon the estate which I was born to heir, and have dwelt in a cottage with

with peace and Agnes, would have been preferable. Alas! neither of those blessings was ever more to be my portion. She, too, made up of soft affections, implored—entreated me to consent; for to know me at once defamed and disinherited, would have sunk her early to the grave. A thousand times was I upon the point of avowing our union, and carrying with me the treasure of my life. But I was going into a camp, to share hardships, and risk dangers which Agnes knew not how to calcucate; nor dared I describe to her tender heart the various horrors of the scene. Yet oh! that she had known them, and, claiming all her rights in and over me, we had together shared the vicissitudes of war, the discomfort of poverty!—Oh! that I had encountered every misery, but the one which I must to the latest moment of existence groan under!

"Having obtained my compliance, Sir Hubert, resuming an air of paternal kindness, gave me a solemn assurance, that his will secured to me those rights of heirship which he had vested in himself only for my sake: nor should he ever alter it, while my conduct was prudent and dutiful. With his customary severe thrift, he, however, neither gave, nor allowed me, more money than was indispensable to my situation; nor could I, in parting, much enrich the angel whom my love had bound to endure the subjection of my father's house. To me it had been, from the hour of our marriage, lessened, for my proud soul already considered the mansion as her own.—The proximity of her parents assured her of tenderness and protection, nor did my absence seem to rob her of any good save my poor self. Her thoughts on this sad separation I understood only by her tears; for Agnes disdained by weak complaints to embitter duty; still less by

by entreaties to interfere with it.—Briefly let me say that I left my love—Oh! that I had left life and her at the same miserable moment.

"I found my regiment ready to embark for Flanders; and soon after I arrived there had occasion enough to show that I neither wanted courage nor conduct. The fluctuations of the war caused me to lose many letters on which my existence seemed to hang. Those that I received gave me a dreadful alarm for the life of Agnes; as from the time of my departure sleep and appetite had fled from her; but all my fears soon ended in the sweetest hopes; for I found that she was likely to become a mother. Yet this pleasure of extended being, which pervades all ranks alike, was damped to me by the recollection of her peculiar situation, under the roof of a man who would be incapable of pardoning her want of fortune; for that

was the only want which malice itself could impute to Agnes. I eagerly exhorted her, before suspicion could arise, to quit not only my father's house, but that of her own; and, ever observant of my will, she answered that her aunt had come from Bristol, on the invitation of her parents, to consult upon her safest and best mode of conduct:—they had agreed that she should accompany her aunt to that city, as in so large a place she would be secure from notice, and might not only lie-in, but safely reside till I should return to England. For this, however, a small supply of money was necessary, and for that she was obliged to look to me. In the certainty of obtaining it, she had, however, already expressed a wish to be dismissed to my lady; who had only required her to stay till another attendant should be procured for Caroline: and this, she added, as she could not leave the country till a remittance arrived, would be no inconvenience.—Alas! this

this letter found me as poor as herself; but the delay made me almost frantic: it eventually proved the death-stroke of our happiness; for before I could aid her removal, came a letter which I have not lost.—Read it yourself; you will have no difficulty, so beautiful is her writing:—hardly was her hand, or even her heart, more so."—

LETTER I.

"Life of my life, how shall I find language or strength to tell—yet vainly should I attempt to conceal, what from others will reach you with every aggravation. Oh Hubert! beloved husband! why did we ever part? or rather, perhaps, why did we ever meet? since we were not allowed to add to each other's happiness.—Could I in your arms find support for this weak and trembling frame,—on your bosom repose this aching

ing head,—in your heart blend grief with grief, I might perhaps gather courage to endure the fate which I have not been able to avoid.—Driven with the grossest indignity, the most heart-wounding contumely, from your father's house, I have returned to the hitherto peaceful dwelling of my own, only to put all peace to flight.—Although sinking into the earth, I dare not ask consolation of my parents; for I, alas! am become their affliction. Bowed as they both are almost to the grave with the weight of my sorrow, their eyes now shun mine.—What have I left in life but you; and you are far—far away from the wretched Agnes!

"Alas! my love, I deserve not the indirect reprehension in your last letter—I make not evils for myself: and your tender exhortation had all the effect you wished. I bewailed no longer the situation I was in. I saw myself, as with a tenderness most ele-

vating

vating you call me, 'the breathing temple of a human soul.' I despised the weakness which made me brood over a poor apprehension for my own safety, in a moment of suffering invariably the lot of woman, while my Hubert, without a fear, daily, nay hourly, risked a life a thousand thousand times dearer to me than my own. I found my health amend daily; and yesterday, only yesterday, did I rise in better spirits than I have known since we parted. One week more, and I should have been quietly enfranchised from my worse than Egyptian bondage; but, alas! my love, heaven had ordained it otherwise.

"The weather has, I fancy, of late been very oppressive, for I have often found myself strangely faint; yet not so faint but that I could conceal it. Yesterday a large company was expected to dinner, and Miss Caroline seemed very anxious to be dressed with nicety. I failed not in exertions to please

please alike herself and her mother: but I was worn out with fatigue, both were so fanciful. I had occasion to fetch your sister some gloves from my own room; and there suddenly cast my eyes on your dear packet, under cover from my father. I tore the envelope off, to assure myself of what I already knew, and kissed all of your writing that ever reached my eyes—the direction:—for, fearing to keep my lady waiting, I put the unopened letter into my bosom, and hastened back.—What was my surprise and vexation, when I found Miss Caroline again completely undressed; and all her beautiful long hair, that I had spent an hour in curling, combed quite out for me to dress again. The impatience I felt to read your letter, the trembling which always seizes me when I receive one from you, the ill-humour of my lady, and the eternal whims of Miss Caroline, altogether, made me feel ready to sink every moment.—Perhaps the heat of the sun, which was upon the room, and they had

had not consideration enough to observe that as I stood it shone almost full upon me (for they kept me all the while standing), might occasion the disorder. Miss Caroline was at last ready. My lady was just going:—one moment more, and I might have lived or died without any human creature's being apprised of my fate;—but that moment was not mine. A strange sensation of giddiness suddenly seized me; and reeling, I caught at Miss Caroline's chair, but wanting power to hold it, I dropped upon the ground. It was, I believe, a long while before Mrs. Margam could bring me to life again; but I saw that I had been removed to the window-seat in the gallery, where the casements were thrown open. I was shocked too at perceiving my clothes loose, and that I was in a manner undressed. The fear of the inquisitive housekeeper's remarks was for a moment my only one,—but in another I missed

missed my letter, and that thought was a bullet shot through my brain. No need had I to inquire for it;—a glance informed me that it was in my lady's hands, while Sir Hubert was raving like a madman. I wonder I did not at once drop down dead with terror, or that our poor infant survived so agonising a pang. I fell into violent fits, from which I had hardly a chance of recovering unassisted as I was; for at intervals I recollect seeing the servants, who were all in a manner round me, standing aloof, as though your poor Agnes had shed pestilence in her very tears.—I had no choice but to utter all the anguish of my soul, and implore the compassion of my lady: this brought out Sir Hubert. I will not further shock you, my love, by descanting on his unkind, I may say unmanly, treatment of me.—Alas! he held in his hand the positive proof that I was your wife; yet he spoke of me as a light wretch—nay, a very vile abandoned

one—

one—for why should you not know the truth?—As such he bade his servants turn me out of his house. His wife, coarse and violent as himself, deigned not to listen to my supplications; nor, though a mother, had she any pity for my situation. The servants, I believe, felt for me, but obedience is the habit of their lives.—Suffice it to say, that your best beloved—your wedded wife, your innocent helpless Agnes, was spurned from your father's door as the most vicious of her sex; and it was shut for ever against her. My head was so weak, my heart so agitated, that I for some moments doubted whether this extraordinary event could be real. — Alas! I found it but too certain, and tried to totter towards the parsonage: but I could get no further than the seat by the stile, under the last elm in the avenue; and here I wondered anew at my own misery! nor could guess what would next become of me. I thought till I was past

all

all thinking; for my poor father, alarmed at some flying report of the servants, was hastening to inquire what had happened, when he saw me 'wounded and bruised by the way side.'—He, who never could see a stranger so, and pass by, rushed to his poor daughter, and his pious tears revived my drooping nature. 'Open *your* paternal arms, dearest, best of men,' cried I, 'for if you too spurn me I must instantly expire!—He clasped me to his bosom, and I thought our hearts would alike have burst under the old elm. He tenderly led me home, where already the whole neighbourhood was gathered:—some to report, some to inquire, some to pity, but all to satisfy their insupportable curiosity, without any compassion for our wounded feelings.—Among them shortly after appeared Sir Hubert's steward; and, by owning a commission to me, released me from my importunate visitants. 'He was,' he said, 'order-

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ed to tell me, that if I had the discretion to avoid attempting to intrude myself on a family who would never admit any claim to be vested in me, I should be treated with favour; and my child properly provided for.' —My father turned his back on the sycophant, and quitted the room.—The man continued to advise me at least to appear compliant, till Sir Hubert should cool. But I saw that to give myself up for a day, was to forfeit all reputation for ever; nor could I suppose you would have wished me thus to act—would you, my love? All the little recollection that the dreadful shock had left me, went simply to forming my conduct, according to what I thought your honour required, and your conscience would dictate. My father had, in the interim, however, decided for us both; as he now re-entered with the church register in his hand.—' Go, Sir,' said he, ' to Sir Hubert, and tell him, such is the power of integrity, that no human

man insult can reach or humble it.—Tell him my daughter has been for some time his own, not by my choice but that of his son: and let him timely consider how he shall answer to his God, if by cruel treatment he should shorten her days, or rob his child of the blessing of becoming in his turn a father.—I have not forgotten that I am in his power:—for his own soul's sake let him not abuse it; I must risk that when my duty is in the question: I have, Sir, already taken all the neighbours whom you saw with me into the church, and there shown them this regular authentic register of a legal marriage.—Look at it yourself, and tell Sir Hubert that I shall leave it open to the inspection of the whole parish. Since we have only virtue, let us fully establish our claim to that.'

"You know how commanding an air my father can assume, though his general manners

ners are simplicity itself. He took my hand and conducted me to the room, leaving, without a look, the mean agent of a mean proposal to stay or go as he pleased.

"When once I was alone,—the violent perturbation of personal suffering and indignity abated;—oh! how acute were my feelings for you!—I, I then, who adore you, have innocently deprived you of your natural inheritance; since to obtain that for her daughter has ever been the object with your step-mother: and Sir Hubert, cruel as I found him, has, I believe, long hesitated to gratify her, from a conscientious, rather than affectionate motive. Sometimes, too, I dread your imputing my sudden deprivation of sense to mere ill-humour, rather than weakness. Yet when did you ever affix an unkind construction on aught I did? and in this cruel instance recollection was lost, for some constitutional pang overcame me.

"My

"My mother's grief surpasses my own; and she has not youth to bear up under it, nor a distant husband to engross her thoughts. She had ever, you know, such a regard for the opinion of the world—has been always so highly esteemed—that, to know all tongues are busy with our names, while humiliation is our portion, will, I fear, shorten her days. Perhaps, too, the recollection of the debt due from my father to yours, adds apprehension to her distress. Yet, however his passion might lead him to injure or insult me, Sir Hubert cannot surely deliberately wreak his vengeance on an upright minister of God.

"Dearest, best of fathers, I *will* be comforted!—at least I must sooth mine with the hope.—He came suddenly upon me, and found me blistering, as you will see, this letter with my tears.

"Husband

"Husband of my heart, love not your hapless Agnes the less for the poverty she may bring on you; and it shall be the business, as it is the duty, of her life to lighten it!—Let us once more meet, my Hubert, and we shall share one fate for the rest of our days."

"I was engaged in very severe service when this killing letter reached me. I wonder, that I did not, in the distraction of my mind, put my head before a cannon in the moment of explosion. Honour itself could not have kept me in Flanders, but that I immediately saw the die was cast, and my return could only supply fuel to the flame which humanity might quench. From my father I had soon after a letter—he reproached me with intriguing under his roof with a worthless girl, and insulting both her family and my own: bade me write to her

to accept his bounty, and not aggravate what was past by pretending that I was married, or I should ruin both her and myself; for he would wholly disinherit me in favour of Caroline. I saw a worldliness in this letter that showed my step-mother had prompted it, and a kind of reluctance in the conclusion which induced me to be very cautious in my answer. I replied, and vindicated myself from the imputed insult to both families, by avowing my marriage, with the means by which I had over-ruled the scruples of my Agnes' father. I entreated Sir Hubert to consider, that if either of us had been culpable in seducing the other from duty, it must be his son; yet at thirty-two to fix my choice was surely pardonable, and to sanctify it could not disgrace me. I implored him by every tender impulse which had made my birth, and that of Caroline, dear to him, to consider the rights of the babe who was soon to be added to his family;

mily; and by protecting the innocent and suffering Agnes, entitle himself to my eternal gratitude as well as duty. To this filial address I had no answer; nor in fact from that moment did I ever receive a single line from my father. I had soon after the ill fortune to lose my baggage, and of course many letters, necessary as well as dear to me.—Of the few that remain this is the next."

LETTER II.

" If it will joy your heart, my best love, to know that I am yet well, take joy; for I am still able to tell you so myself—although I am so altered, that I am almost glad that you cannot see the shapeless Agnes. My father has ever been the tenderest of comforters, and I must now very soon have another—o dear—Oh! Hubert, how

 dear!

dear!—I sometimes sit and wonder if the babe will be like yourself.—What a treasure to me, who have no picture of you, should I hold a living one in my arms: and I can talk to that of its father, from morning to night, without tiring it.

"My appetite returns with my peace of mind, and I eat a hearty dinner now every day, though so long out of the habit of it. Nothing reconciles us to the inconveniences of poverty like experiencing the miseries of grandeur—poor things as we are, to sacrifice so much comfort to pride.—Could I have resolved to return to my own humble home, I should at once have told my parents how my lady treated me, and then they would have sent for me back again ere you came from abroad; then should I not have been in your way every day, and all the day. And would I have had it thus?—I dare not ask my selfish heart: for, early

used

used to endure poverty, I might perhaps have gladly compounded for that to be the wife of my Hubert: but when I reflect that I may rob him of affluence—there is the sting.

"Grieve no more, my life, that you cannot send me money—in our humble situation a little suffices; and now I see the neighbours are convinced that I am your wife, I do not so much wish to leave home. My poor mother cannot bear I should be without her aid; and indeed I am such a tender timid thing, that I know not what would become of me if I left her. My father, finding Sir Hubert's hatred of me inveterate, thinks my quitting the country might make the birth of your son, if a son it should be, disputable: he therefore says the whole neighbourhood shall be able to testify that the child is ours. Yet it is irksome to encounter cold looks from those whom one has been

been accustomed to live well with; and though many of our neighbours have a regard for us, none dare smile when their landlord frowns. I could on that account prefer going to my aunt; but the will of my father was ever mine, till I found a dearer law-giver in my husband.

"I could tell you something enchanting of Caroline, if I were not afraid of wounding, of humbling you—yet ought any thing to do that which springs from right feeling? The precious child contrived to send me a hurried, but very affectionate letter, to say how sorry she was that she might not come and see me; and that she had teased her godmother out of almost a whole piece of cambric to dress her doll, in hopes it would make a robe for the baby; and this present accompanied the letter. She adds too, that it would delight her to be a god-mother herself, only I must not tell any body of it—

they

they would be so angry. By this she implies both parents: so they talk of us sometimes you find. If it is a boy, she wishes him to be called Edmund, yet gives an odd reason for the wish—that she overheard her papa say, he hoped I would *not* give my brat that name. Sir Hubert must have some motive: —let me know your own choice that I may not err."

"This innocent and kind letter of my sister's, in showing the generous feelings of her nature, endeared her much to mine—the hint too appeared of importance to our little one, if it proved a boy. The first son of my parents, who died at seven years old, in fact, before I was born, had been called Edmund: and, like other short-lived children, remained on record as a model of perfection.—In the hope that as his thoughts were

were yet upon us, my father would relent, my mind became more composed; which was absolutely necessary to the closing of a troublesome wound, which I had never dared to own myself to be suffering under; nor was I without the painful addition of cramped circumstances: for never, from the moment that I avowed my marriage, did my father remit me a guinea. The blessed news I soon received, that my Agnes had made me a parent, and, with a lovely boy, was doing well, left no other misery on my mind than that of absence. Oh! how I longed at once to enfold in my arms the unknown babe, and my suffering angel! See what she says—

LETTER III.

"Yes! I hold now in my fond arms the blessed image of him ever in my heart:

clasp

clasp our lovely boy, my Hubert, in imagination, to the bosom from which he sprang; and bow to the God who has borne me thus safely through so many trials, even though your eye is not on me to cherish, your voice is not near to invigorate, my languid nature.

"My mother would fain persuade me that I am too delicate to nurse our darling myself, but God surely never made that woman a mother who is really unequal to the first duty of the maternal character. Sweet little fellow! as he lies at my bosom, his moaning short-breathed satisfaction is music to my ear, and rewards me for the determination I have shown.

"It is impossible to tell you how much kindness I have received from many who are afraid to avow the part they take in our welfare: presents have been sent often

from

from I know not whom—baskets of delicacies have been found in the orchard—the poor old butler, your nurse's husband, brought me some of the fine rich sack which your father values so, and said, that if Sir Hubert hanged him for it, he would not know his young master's lady want. He begged so hard to have a look at the babe, that my mother prevailed on me for one moment to suffer her to take him out of my sight:—the worthy soul clasped him in his arms, and, falling on his knees, prayed to Almighty God to bless the sweetest child he ever set eyes on. Do you know the precious crowed as he looked up in his face, my mother tells me—indeed, the angel hardly ever cries.—Alas! my babe, I have shed tears enough for both of us,—and my poor—poor mother does little else. She never sleeps either, and looks so broken and wan!—Ah! if I have gained one blessing only to lose another: but my restless sensi-

bility

bility may be too much alive: let me hope that we have passed the roughest part of our journey; and though the hut where we rest ourselves is low and humble, we have only to get you among us, and to reconcile our minds to the future, when we may look down upon Sir Hubert and his selfish lady.

"Caroline, in quilted satin, sent me two guineas, *for her godson*—Darling creature! —who was ever more generous?—since it is, she says, her all.

"On Sunday, my father is resolved that I shall go to church as Mrs. Powis, where he will publicly baptise our boy, by that name, and Edmund with it—though I am not sanguine on the influence of sound over him in whom nature is annihilated. Oh! my love, that I had but you to countenance and support me!"

"How

"How heavenly a disposition is seen in this letter, through which we may discern that my angel and her infant daily felt every distress but the bitter one of absolute want; and not from the least of her humiliations could her husband save her—killing recollection! Again too was I plundered of my baggage, and a chasm of a year appears in our correspondence, while still the war raged, and left me no hope of revisiting England."

LETTER IV.

"Oh! what a joy, my Hubert!—why are you not present to share it?—Dearest of husbands, these poor arms are lightened, as well as my heart; our little man walks!—ay, walks alone; and is so full of his own performance—so proud of it.—He took his grand-

grandfather's stick this morning, and tried to shoulder it, as I had in play done; looking up at me with a smile so like your own. Oh! what a tearful pleasure was it to gaze on him, my Hubert!—I am tempted every word I write to tell you how very beautiful he is; but as all the people round us declare him to be my image, I am ashamed, though in my eyes he is your picture in miniature. Were his proud grandfather once to see the cherub, he surely would relent; for when I look on him, I feel convinced that no parent can resist the impetuous gush of natural affection. Were this afflicting war once at an end, and we had you with us—did your father see the sweet child in your arms, all would be well; but I have no power to move him—perhaps no right to expect it. In the sad uncertainty of your return I am nevertheless brooding over a project of my own, which I will not communicate till I know the result; and my smiling babe is to

be

be the principal agent. Every day do I give him a lesson of love—at the spot too where first I learned it. Ah! know you not that to have been at the grave of our dear Llewellyn?

"Your remittance, my best love, is come to hand. Alas! I am convinced that you deny every thing to yourself for our sakes. I have now time for employment; and do not you blush that I have obtained some? you know that I am a nice needle-woman, and I have neither my dear husband nor Caroline to work for. You have no idea how fine a young creature your sister grows: her present governess is a French woman, who scowls at me and my boy, as though she were to have Sir Hubert's estate. I dare not venture upon his immediate precincts, but I wander almost every day to the ches-nut grove, and weep as I wistfully survey the temple above, where you used to stand

with

with your enchanting clarionet, and steal my heart through my ear; for you had many—many ways of making it all your own. Oh! how dreary appears the spot, where I no more can behold my Hubert! —and it is I who have robbed him of his inheritance!—I, who keep him in exile!—I, who lived but in his sight!—One day as I was toiling up the hill, Miss Caroline espied me from the sun-dial on the terrace, and not heeding the commands of her governess, who passionately jabbered French, flew through the little garden gate, and, reaching me, clasped and kissed her godson with infinite tenderness. She sweetly too called me by your name!—delightful was the sound from your sister. 'Is this a hat for Sir Hubert's heir?' cried she, throwing off disdainfully the one which our boy wore. Do you know the darling looks at it ever since with as much contempt as his little aunt did, and never more would put it on?

You

You need not be afraid that I shall make him too humble, though you compliment me with being so: I rank him by your degree, not my own, and only value myself as the mother of my Hubert's son. All my girlish apparel I have given up, to deck the dear one.—Ah! what can add to his beauty?

"I wish that I could relieve your mind about my poor mother, but she has never been the same creature since my day of disgrace; and grows now so thin and weak, that, unless you return to revive her spirits, by recalling her hopes, I fear she will droop even to death: yet she so doats upon our boy, that I really believe she forgives us both all the tears we have made her shed, whenever he climbs up her knee, as she sits perusing the Bible; and, stealing her spectacles, holds them over his own lovely eyes, and most sententiously hums, as though reading; imitating my father's sonorous voice: and

you may guess, smother him with caresses. Ah! he is a sad pet, without your assistance."

LETTER V.

"Alas! my Hubert, I have now done my very utmost to move your father, and have failed. I would not allow either pride, or the sense of humiliation, to interfere with my duty. If poverty is to be the portion of our lovely boy, as well as our own, let him hereafter remember that his mother humbled herself to the dust to obtain for him a better fortune.

"Yet surely, if Sir Hubert had but one spark of humanity, not to mention feeling, I could not have failed; for well our little smiler acquitted himself in the trial. It had

long been my idea that, could I venture to take my child to church, and be secure of his remaining quiet, the pious feelings attendant upon the awful place, and duty, would co-operate with the strong pulsations of nature to produce in your father some tenderness towards my boy, if no pity for his unfortunate mother. That no displeasure towards me might induce Sir Hubert to stay away from the sacred duty, I have long done so; and contented myself with praying at home, till I could trust to my influence over my sweet boy to keep him quiet.—During the last three months he has been capable of observance, and every day have I taken him to the grave of Llewellyn; there, without witnesses, has his doating mother imposed on him the painful penance of silence: this for a great while the animated cherub neither understood, nor approved; but finding that all his winning ways, and little efforts at talking, produced no

no return from me, except my pressing a finger on my lip, he gave up the point, and grew habitually silent—though he wondered why, as I guessed by his sweet intelligent eyes.

"On Good Friday, as the season when every Christian is thrown solemnly upon his conscience and his feelings, I called upon mine to carry me through my determined duty. I waited till the whole congregation was collected; and Sir Hubert, his lady, and daughter, were all in the great seat; when, to the general consternation, with my eyes humbly fixed on the ground, and my deserted son in my arms, I came into the aisle, when I suddenly trembled so that I feared I could not walk up it. My poor father, whom I had not apprised of my intention, lest he should construe it to be a scheme, and unsuited to the sanctity of the day, was already in the reading desk, and had begun—'If we

say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves'—His voice faltered at sight of me, and a momentary pause in the service rendered the sentence he had pronounced peculiarly impressive. Having tottered to the grave of Llewellyn, I sat down upon the flat raised stone that covers him; just under that dear eternal token of your generous friendship, the marble monument. I took off, as the solemn place required, the interesting babe's hat; and thus showed his lovely eyes, and all the rich curls of his hair. I thought more than once that Sir Hubert looked askance at him, but it became not me to watch his eyes. I was employed in observing that the darling broke not in upon the solemn order of the place. Twenty times was he going to speak aloud, when a look of mine corrected him; and imitatively pressing his pretty finger on his rosy lip, the precious would archly smile, and hide his beloved head on my bosom. Poor Caroline

thought

thought not, I am sure, of her prayers; but her mother disdainfully turned away, nor once vouchsafed a glance on me or my Edmund, while every other eye in the church was fixed on us both.

"The service over, Sir Hubert (which indicated that he was disturbed in mind) rose, hastily, to go out. I likewise arose, and, with my boy in my arms, must, you will recollect, almost touch him. The darling child, as if intuitively to second me, reached out his little hand, till it brushed his grandfather's shoulder; and, in admiration of his scarlet laced waistcoat, cried out, 'Oh! fine!' Think whether it was not a dagger to my heart to see Sir Hubert shake him off in a manner, and hurry out of the church. I almost fainted; but my father, solemnly blessing me, bade me begone, and leave him to his duty: and now, my love, I despair indeed; for if our sweet boy moved not Sir Hubert's heart, less than an angel never can.

"To

"To spare my poor parents seeing the extent of my grief and disappointment, I wandered the next morning to the solitary spot under the hollow of the hill, where you used so often to study; and there staid reading and weeping, and weeping and reading:—I need hardly add, that it was your letters, which thus employed me. Our rosy cherub had just found, the early produce of the spring, some tufts of primroses, and gathering handfuls of them, brought the treasure to me, and enfolding some in every letter, made signs to me to seal each; and, with exultation, added—'Papa.'—This tender reference, at so early an age, to my feelings, and a beloved though unknown parent, strangely blended my sorrow with delight. I was caressing the lovely creature, when I heard voices very near me, and, raising my eyes, saw two ill-looking men with guns in their hands: the inveterate hatred of his grand-father came suddenly into my mind. I started up, and with my child

child in my arms, ran like a wild thing till I reached old Mary's cottage—I hardly thought it possible that I should have run so far, for our Edmund now grows heavy. The men yet loitered, but, Heaven be praised, we escaped them. Should my boy be either killed or kidnapped, life would become an insupportable burden to me:—never more will I go out of the reach of assistance. When I told this alarm to my father, he seemed to think my own danger greater than my son's; but I am his child, Edmund mine. Oh! when will you come to protect us both?"

"The next letter informed me of what I had long fearfully expected—the death of my dear love's mother; and heavy did Agnes find the loss. It added likewise to the pecuniary embarrassments of her estimable father. To complete our misfortunes,

I was

I was a second time severely wounded at the battle of Dettingen, and taken prisoner. The exertion of valour which exposed me to this evil was, however, highly spoken of; and death had been so busy there, that it was hardly a distinction for me to rise. Promotion of the most honourable kind was mine; and my uncle, the General, still alive to military glory, broke his long silence with a kind letter; inclosing, with the coarse observation that my father was probably as close-fisted as ever, the blessed relief of a bill for a hundred pounds. It came, however, too late to save my arm, which, by the ignorance of the surgeon appointed to attend me, I had lost the use of; and I had been too poor, till now, to call in other advice: my very soul was cheared, however, in remitting half the money to my Agnes, within a letter which her father received, but not herself, for, oh? this was the answer.—

LETTER

LETTER VI.

"Unhappy husband!—visited of heaven!—too severely do I share, to soften as I would, the calamity which it is my dreadful duty to communicate. The comfort of my age—my darling Agnes, is lost for ever!—your precious boy, too, is for ever gone! Let us humbly hope that her reason failed ere her own rash hand thus cut short lives so precious.—Spare, spare me the horrible particulars of an indubitable fact.—Again has the grave of my Llewellyn been opened.—Alas! that some pious hand had laid my ashes there, ere I had survived to read the funeral service over the last of my race!—but I resign myself to the will of God:—ask comfort of him, my son—he alone can give it to you!"

"Oh

"Oh no!—nor God—nor man—nor time—nor circumstances have ever given it to me!" cried the agonised Cary, eagerly snatching the letters to bury them again in his bosom, as if with them he there could again have buried their contents.—"Such was my frantic desolation of mind, that the enemy rather chose to give me liberty without a cartel, than take charge of such a wild wretch. I found letters announcing a legacy from the General, adequate to my future wants; and in the flaming anguish of my soul I vented to my father all I felt. I told him, I think I told him, that 'I would spare him the added sin of disinheriting me—I disinherited myself!—I renounced with horror the poor plot of over-valued earth, where my Agnes, driven by his neglect to despair, had sought with my boy an untimely grave. His ample possessions were only that in my eyes; and a distant land should inhume my bones, where he should never

never trace me.—Since his inhumanity had rendered me single in creation, he should find that he had for ever lost his son in the horrible hour when I lost mine!'—Before it was possible that this purpose should be defeated, I had lodged my legacy in the Dutch funds, under the name I now bear, after which I sailed for America. From that period I have been a citizen of the world—without tie, connexion, correspondence, hope, or wish. The only mitigation of suffering I have ever found is motion; and had I not full power to ramble and ruminate, I should soon become a lunatic. That horrible calamity I have, however, escaped: for all the singularities which mark my conduct are the fruit of reflexion, and of an intelligence"—Cary paused, then with a bewildered air, and increased solemnity added, " Henry, I love you much—I have permission—that power"—Again he abruptly paused, and cast his eager expressive eyes

every

every way around, as if to mark if aught human were within ear-shot. From the vacated Indian hut, into which the friends had retreated to rest themselves, Henry did the same; and struck no less with the sublime solitude they had reached than the affecting visionary with whom his soul was so powerfully assimilating, he sighed. The friends were standing on a craggy height, having rounded one yet more elevated, which shut from their view the town and harbour. Above and below, far as the eye could reach, rolled in majestic windings the river St. Lawrence; while a hundred rills, formed by the melting snows, through as many inlets of the rocky banks, shone silvery to the sunbeams. The enormous woods behind them, coëval apparently with time itself, haughtily seemed to shake off the white burden of premature old age, and blend the budding verdure of spring with icicles but half dissolved; while the tufts of mould on which

they

they trod, threw up, in almost wasteful gaiety, rich half-blown flowerets, even though on their neighbouring masses of painted stone the chill frost lay yet unmelted. This union of contrarieties in nature, Henry felt to be like that between himself and Cary: but for man there is, alas! no renovation on this side of the grave.—'I shall go to him, but he will never return to me,' murmured the sympathetic youth. Even these imperfect accents recalled Cary from the deep and mysterious meditation into which he had fallen; who thus resumed his discourse.—"Think not, my young friend, that it would have been possible for me thus long to have dragged on existence had I wholly lost Agnes.—Oh no!" added he, striking his breast, while with exultation he raised his tone of voice, "mine is an enviable, a triumphant lot.—That purer part of my lovely wife, her disembodied blessed spirit, in its sublime

essence,

essence, deigns yet at intervals to hover over me in hallowed visitation: nor can I reconcile to your comprehension the appalling fore-knowledge I have of her approach. The adored vision is at once glorious—indistinct — incomprehensible — shadowy — chilling — formless. Though this ethereal intercourse is the sole delight of my life, imperfect mortality ever shudders to meet it; and a dreadful struggle, as of dissolution, announces to me her presence. Almighty power!" exclaimed he, springing passionately forward, but in a moment shrinking back, he had hardly breath to utter '*Now! now!*'—when, withering as it were in the arms of young Pembroke, he added faintly, —" I feel her now—in every fibre—in every aching pore!—Cold—cold—humid—earthy!" Large drops of sweat started upon the forehead of the impressive visionary, and there seemed to congeal.—The playful muscles of his lips stiffened in mystical reverential

rential silence, and his fine eyes became mere orbs without expression. By a painful effort he rose from his supporter, and voluntarily prostrating himself on the cold ground, waved his hand as chusing to be left there. Henry Pembroke, in almost equal horror, wept to see

——"That noble and most sovereign reason,
"Like sweet bells jangled thus, and out of tune."

But to shrink from the martyr of sensibility was not in his nature.—On the contrary, fully convinced that the malady thus courted must be incurable, Henry hardly felt himself less bound by that, than the ties of gratitude, to the interesting sufferer, over whom he had in all other instances an almost boundless influence.

Cary at length arose as from a trance; and having on his knee devoutly offered up a silent thanksgiving, turned to Pembroke,

in whose intelligent eyes still swam tears of tender compassion. Wiping from his fore-head the cold drops that yet hung there, the fond visionary raised his brow with an almost celestial complacency; while his eyes even lightened with ecstasy, and on his sun-burnt cheek sprung up a rich glow that gave life to many a trace of long-buried manly beauty. Pembroke, on seeing the soul thus powerfully break through the cloud of human calamity, beheld in the grand creature before him a seer of ancient days; and now surveyed the scene, and now the man, with a wonder that made him almost envy so elevating a malady, and for ever impressed on his memory the hour he passed with Cary on the rocky heights of Canada.

"The suffering you have witnessed," said the recovered wanderer, in a solemn and collected voice, "is, you now know, tempo-

rary,

rary, but the pure peace it breathes through my nature long and lasting. This holy indulgence was, however, so sudden, that I feared it might be to reprove my communication: but the angel sanctions it."—'I would have known how you obtained such grace, but I had no answer. Doubtless, the sympathy of your generous nature touches hers; though to you she will never be revealed.'—"Ah, no! that awful distinction is mine—mine only.—You may, perhaps, witness more of these trances:—let me warn you ever to retire in devout silence:—break them not, I charge you, lest over-wrought nature should make the life vanish with the spirit that suspends it."

The holy kind of calm which followed the intellectual error of Cary a little reconciled Henry to it; but he secretly resolved forever, if possible, to avoid witnessing these temporary suspensions of mental, and per-

haps animal life, which he felt it impossible to behold without a suffering hardly inferior.

"With a restless mind, and speculative eyes," concluded Cary, "have I, since I quitted the army, traversed almost the whole known world,—guarded in savage regions,—supported in desert ones,—visited in such as are not utterly defiled by cruelty, and the train of execrable human passions, by the spirit of my angel.—Many years did I reside on the banks of the Ganges, with the pure of heart among the Bramins; and that I might win their regard, I accustomed myself to diet in their manner. My heavenly visitations at that period became so much more frequent, that I resolved never again to render myself the tomb of any creature which had once known life. But this abstinence sprung not from supposing that the ethereal spirit lodged in man, though sullied

lied by imperfection, or stained by vice, can ever be condemned to grovel in an animal. —Oh, no! I had an awful conviction that it takes a higher flight:—if my love for these faithful creatures," pointing to his two beautiful spaniels, "has countenanced this supposition, know that it was by command I took—I cherished them:—it is not for me to inquire, but to obey.

"Believe me, Henry, it belongs only to little minds, and such as move in a narrow space, to be decided, and opinionated. The further we extend our progress in life, and the more we observe upon society at large, the more cautious do we become of pronouncing judgement on others. All countries, nations, and sects, either naturally or accidentally differ: yet I have always found this infinity of modes of thinking and acting so justifiable, whenever I listened to the parties immediately governed by them, that

it appears to me, the only conclusion we can fairly draw from the little we gather in our journey through life, is, that so much must ever remain unknown to us in the material as well as immaterial world, as renders human wisdom in its amplest extent only enlightened ignorance. It is not, therefore, the man who knows most, but the man who makes the best use of his knowledge, that is entitled to our admiration:—he who, disdaining the vain parade of science, simplifies all his talents and acquirements into virtue and benevolence, is, whatever may be his country, or opinions, 'the noblest work of God.' He darts not, it is true, an eccentric course like a comet, whose rays excite wonder and apprehension, but are without utility: —no, like a fixed star he holds his place in the host of heaven; and while he benignly illuminates his own sphere, he is at once reverentially beheld and understood,

by

by all who live within reach of his influence."

"What a piece of work is man!" sighed Henry to himself:—"yet this is one well worth saving. Yes, Cary, I will struggle hard to bring back to reason a mind so glorious in its wanderings:—you shall return with me; you, too, shall live in the innocent smiles of Julia;—you, too, shall see, and share, the benevolence of our father."

The volunteer was yet a mere novice in knowledge of the world, and naturally credulous; he therefore easily persuaded himself, that this visionary friend had too fully relied on a letter, which, however decisive, was not circumstantial or explicit. Could he once induce Cary again to revisit his own country, the part of it which contained his lost treasure would soon, he supposed, be discovered: and perhaps, upon inquiry,

some

some information might occur to lighten his cruel sense of the calamity, if not to restore the lamented object.

Among Cary's objections to returning, Henry soon found that the dread lest his ethereal visitations should not be as frequent, was predominant: yet great was the struggle between the living and the dead, in the too susceptible soul of the supposed misanthrope. Long unused to the tender intercourse of friendship that he now daily held with Pembroke, and relieved from the weight of his own secret, by a confidence which so endeared the person trusted, Cary knew not how to resist the importunate entreaties of the grateful, the affectionate Henry, to go with him,—to share for life his heart—his attentions—his situation. The anxiety with which Cary had watched Henry during a dangerous and long confinement, had centred his thoughts and feelings so much in the

the youth, that he felt a dread, a horror, at the idea of being suddenly left in the worst of all solitude—that of the soul; again to traverse the vast wilds of America, and once more to mingle with savages only, whose nearest approach to society is not offending against it. Long conflicts of this kind soon brought upon the interesting visionary one of his trances, in which he fancied the beatified spirit bade him accompany Henry. The youth was just on the point of embarking, and seized this happy moment to hurry away with him the friend whom he knew not how to lose for ever. In the close intercourse which a ship necessarily induces, Henry easily discovered by what means the powerful imagination of Cary had been bewildered; for he found his abstinence excessive, and his use of laudanum immoderate. Sometimes the youth was tempted to throw his friend's medicine chest overboard; and at others to qualify the drug with

with water: but Cary was so worn out with confinement in the narrow limit of the vessel, and so shaken in mind as they approached England, that Henry ventured not to lessen the veteran's only relief till both should be more at ease.

The thoughts of Henry during the voyage were wholly engrossed by the dear object of his fondest affections. Reduced, and exhausted in constitution,—worn, and wan in look,—his heart had not lost any of its energy, and each quick throb bore through his secret soul the name of Julia. Was he sure that he could see in this much-loved creature only a sister?—Was he sure that if Vernon should be with her he could conceal the misery of his mind?—Alas! he was not sure of any thing but the tumult of expected pleasure, tempered with dread.

Mr. Pembroke, apprised of the delicate state

state of Henry's health, and the probable time of his arrival, had sent an easy travelling chaise, and two trusty servants much attached to the youth, to wait his landing at Portsmouth. Their well-known faces instantly brought the dear familiar charm of home, the sweet remembrance of his boyish days, before the young volunteer. He was never tired of seeing, and of asking from them a thousand little domestic occurrences, which correspondence, even when unreserved, conveys not. In these chearful and eager discussions Cary could not possibly be a party, and insensibly his misanthropy recurred with the idea of loneliness and desertion.—England had for him too its overwhelming train of recollections; but they breathed no enlivening spirit through his nature, and he almost sullenly sunk again into himself. Henry saw this with compassion; but as it was for the veteran's own relief, not any personal gratification, that he had

had brought him over, he thought it best not to be too quick-sighted. In truth, he was no longer master enough of his own faculties to withdraw them from the dearer objects towards whom he was now rapidly approaching:—fast as post-horses with relays could carry the friends they drove to Castle St. Hilary; and the ease of the carriage made Henry propose to his companion proceeding by night, as well as day. Cary made no objection, but added continually to his dose of laudanum as his fatigue increased. At the grey dawn of the second morning, after winding up a high mountain, the carriage stopped. Through the gates Henry's eager eyes perceived, within a lighted hall, his father hastening, newly arisen; and the lovely Julia in her nightcap and robe-de-chambre. In a moment he shot into their arms; and the sweet tumult of melting emotions absorbed recollection. The altered countenance, and thin

 person

person of Henry, then awakened all Julia's anxious feelings! and to see his arm yet in a sling shocked his father. The gouty limp of that excellent man touched the affectionate heart of Henry; but the rich roses of Julia's cheek gave him sweet assurance that sorrow was yet far from her heart, consequently that she knew not love. In a momentary intermission of exquisite delight, the recollection of Cary flashed across the mind of the young man; and shame, at the consciousness of having wanted feeling, as well as politeness, tinctured his complexion with a bloom as lovely as Julia's own.—"My friend, Sir!" cried he, starting up,—"where is my friend?"—"Call him *my* friend too," fondly returned Mr. Pembroke, "whoever he is; and a very dear one if his name should be Cary." Upon inquiry, Henry became yet more distressed; for he learned that the veteran, in alighting from the chaise, had slipped down, and greatly hurt his ancle,

cle, which the housekeeper was chafing, as he would not allow any one to interrupt the re-united family, in a moment of so joyful a meeting. With Julia in his hand, as his apology, Henry in a moment flew to the side of the veteran; who gazed on her with a wild and boundless admiration: while to the cordial greeting of Mr. Pembroke he gave little attention, and no answer; nor did he even attempt to silence the reproaches with which the ingenuous youth loaded himself. Henry was struck with the secret dread of an approaching trance; but the assiduous softness of Julia soon lessened his apprehension. She had long used herself to every endearing care of her father in his fits of the gout; nor did she think the man who had nursed, and perhaps saved Henry, less an object of her attention. On her knees she would bathe the hurt leg, while in mute wonder Cary regarded her; and with her own soft snowy hand

hand she bound up the injured ancle. It was with difficulty that they could prevent the sufferer, though still silent, from adoring the gracious vision, for such he seemed to imagine her.

The servants newly arrived having, by this time, circulated among those left at home, how rapidly the travellers had posted, Mr. Pembroke no longer wondered that a man advanced in life should be exhausted; —it astonished him that the impaired constitution of his dear Henry could sustain such fatigue: yet the exertion of the heart always has its due weight with the heart. Sentence of bed was passed upon the travellers by Mr. Pembroke; and a most happy slumber closed, after so many years of voluntary exile, the eyes of Henry beneath the paternal roof: for to his own satisfaction had he supported the painful pleasure of again enfolding Julia to his bosom.

Each following day, for many ensuing ones, seemed too short for the various details, inquiries, and narrations of every incident that had occurred individually to Mr. Pembroke, Henry, and Julia. Cary was for a fortnight necessarily confined to his bed, by an inflammation on the muscles of the leg. Henry and Julia, hand in hand, came constantly to spend some hours by him; and the pleasure he took in their company brought again to being those latent charms and merits, which he could not equally disclose to Mr. Pembroke; who saw with astonishment the partiality of both his young folks to the man whom he thought a repulsive misanthrope. The rest of their time the young people passed in visiting the wild and singular scenes round St. Hilary: while, still untired, Henry always wanted to see something which Julia alone could show him; hear something Julia alone could tell him: and, by those little exqui-

site

site artifices the heart so well knows how to suggest and vary, obtained almost an exclusive monopoly of Julia's company.

Mr. Pembroke, accustomed to every benignant exertion of friendship and hospitality, held its first principle to be leaving his guests to think and act for themselves. After, therefore, a few cordial visits to Cary, with liberal offers of such comfort as an affluent and social home can supply to a solitary wanderer, he considered that gentleman as a part of his family: though not without wondering how it was possible that a being so solitary, rugged, and eccentric, should have fixed the friendship, and touched the feelings of Henry, whose own manners and conduct were marked by singular elegance and refinement. To indirect inquiries on this head, Henry gave his father only the general answer, that his friend had not been always thus unsocial; and that he owed his own life to a

ten-

tenderness which a similar occasion would always call forth; though at other times it was chilled by recollected misfortunes. The sad detail Cary had given of himself, the youth held to be too singular and sacred a confidence ever to pass his lips, without that friend's previous concurrence.

It was soon known through the family that the stranger, as he never tasted animal food, sat not down to the dinner-table. An additional roll, and a couple of hard eggs, were, therefore, usually sent to his apartment with his breakfast: after which he almost always disappeared, and ate his hermit meal in some haunt of the mountains. The close of day, however, generally brought him home again: and if Henry was accompanying Julia with his clarionet, as was their common employ, while Mr. Pembroke played chess with Mr. Benson his chaplain, Cary would choose the most re-

mote

mote corner of the saloon, and listen in silence till the music ended; a civil good-night was all he then uttered. This conduct sometimes distressed Henry: more especially as he had robbed himself of all right to remonstrate from the moment he conferred an obligation. The motive that induced him to bring the incurable sufferer to England still impelled him to follow, soothe, court him: but Mr. Pembroke, not bound by the same delicacy to endurance, nor the same confidence to sympathy, daily bewailed the hour that Henry had first met this forbidding inmate; and was often painfully struck with the idea of a predominating affection in meritorious exertions of mere humanity from the youth to his friend. The pungent pang of his earlier days then came over him again; and he fancied it at times impossible to be truly loved by another man's son.

In the delightful hours of unreserved communication, while Julia was pointing out the various scenes of solitary beauty around to her brother, each alike indirectly sought to trace the future plans of the other. Alas! they were of necessity ultimately the same;—elegant pursuits—unwearied and equal attention to their father—a life of celibacy, and the constant society of each other, seemed to comprehend their views, and to bound their wishes.

Mr. Pembroke, who had resided in Wales that he might at once indulge Julia, and use every means in his power to discover the parentage of Henry, having failed in the last object, and regained the society of the youth under circumstances so honourable to himself as might obviate all his former objections to Farleigh, suddenly became tired of St. Hilary: and complaining of the air of the mountain as too sharp for a gouty habit,

bit, had the pleasure of being urged by Henry as well as Julia to return to his own mansion. Thus satisfied of the harmony that would hereafter reign in Farleigh, he would have set out for home immediately, had he not been in expectation of a visit from Lady Trevallyn: who had promised herself, in the company of Mr. Pembroke and his family, a pleasure which she could no otherwise find in a place where domestic affairs must nevertheless bring her. Julia observed, that if they were ready to depart when this charming friend came, they might all quit the castle together; and perhaps tempt her to stop awhile, on her way home, at Farleigh.

The beautiful month of June was already begun, and its close was the appointed time for the visit of the engaging widow. A season like that would make any place pleasant; and since Henry was for ever to leave

the romantic solitudes of St. Hilary, he resolved to make the most of his short term there. All the mornings, therefore, he usually spent in riding and rambling with Cary, and the afternoons in the same manner with Julia; while Mr. Pembroke, in the hope that Cary would either take up his abode in some cave on a mountain, or, in following the family to Farleigh, associate according to the modes of civil life, endured without any remonstrance the present plans, though they sometimes left him alone till late in the evening, except for the company of Mr. Benson; who attacked him at his favourite game of chess, and often kept him up to a late hour.

One night, Julia having sat by her father till twelve, without complaining of fatigue, though riding had almost overpowered her, became exhausted and faint; and Mr. Pembroke, reproaching himself for inattention,

hastened her to bed; after which he, with all the family, retired.—Henry having, however, been agitated by hearing Julia speak in terms of high esteem of young Vernon, could not calm his heart enough to think of sleep. He therefore attempted not to go to bed, but paced a long while about his chamber. The silence of midnight was only broken by an owl, who hooted from the tower of the church, once belonging to the ruined priory which it adjoined. Henry had been listening to this dreary musician from the casement, when, drawing his head in, he heard so deadly a shriek as almost to transfix him to the spot. The first thought of a tender heart is ever on the object most dear to it; and that Julia was in danger alone occurred to Henry—though how, he could not imagine. With a pistol in his hand, and his sword under his arm, he flew towards her apartment, which was one of a suite of rooms at that end of the long gallery which was farthest from his own. Each

step

step he took, however, lessened his fears, by convincing him that the sound was not near Julia; and he doubted whether he should not rather alarm than relieve her did he knock at her door; but with now her eye and now her ear to the key-hole, she was already stationary there; and well knowing the sound of his step, conjured him to wait a moment, when she would bring a light which she usually burnt, and lessen her own apprehension by accepting his protection. The dreadful and unintelligible shrieks increased every moment; but Julia, catching his arm as she rushed forward, told him that she recollected the voice to be that of her woman, who slept almost over Henry's own chamber. As they passed though the higher galleries together, each chamber-door exhibited a head variously capped, but not one showed the whole body belonging to it. The screamer proved to be struggling in strong fits; and Henry, though of a muscular form, found that he could not

confine

confine her without further assistance. The servants, who were now summoned by Julia, and emboldened by seeing a light, emerged; and the room was soon crowded with curious half-dressed figures, whose voices made them known rather than their faces.—The poor maid, after a variety of applications, came a little to herself, but obstinately hid her head under the clothes, and trembled so much that the bed shook with her. Julia twenty times demanded if she did not know who spoke, before she answered. "Oh yes, Madam! I know you well enough; but it is *there*—I am sure it is *there*, and I shall die if I see it again?" "See what?" cried Henry. —"Oh, Sir! look about—cannot you see it?—can nobody see it then but me?"— "What are we likely to see? or rather what do you imagine you have seen, Lucas?" said her lady. "Oh Lord, Madam! what you may all see—though, perhaps, I am the only person to have this warning; and this may be

be a call to me only.—I little thought of my turn coming so soon." "Why, what call, what warning is this poor thing talking about?" cried Mr. Pembroke, who, ailing as he was, had limped up stairs.—"My good girl, tell us what has thus frightened you:—what have you seen?"—"Oh! my dear good Sir, I am glad you are come. Send for Mr. Aubrey, and the church Bible, for I dare not look up. I saw—as sure as you are alive I saw—the ghost!"—Saw what, girl?" exclaimed Mr. Pembroke, with severity; while every servant, by an involuntary leap, had removed farther from the bed, and all with a stifled groan ejaculated "Lord in heaven forbid!"—"The *ghost!*" after a pause said her master; "do any of you know"—"Oh! yes, Sir, we all know," cried a dozen voices at once. "Well, at any rate, speak only one of you at a time.—Jenkin, you are an old servant at the castle, what do you know, and who is the ghost?"—"Why,

for

for a matter of that, Sir, there be a power of them, as they tells I; for numbers of folk have seen deadly strange sights here, though, for my part, I never met with nothing—but for noises I must say—however, Mrs. Lucas seems to have something on her mind:—pray tell his honour what sort of a shape the ghost appeared in to you."—"I will, Sir, I will," cried the terrified Lucas, raising herself in her bed, and looking as wildly and wistfully round, as if she suspected the ghost of the cowardice of sculking behind the company.—"Sir, I must tell you that I was in a heavy sleep, for I never had a thought of a ghost: indeed, Mr. Layton had talked me, Lord forgive my presumption! out of the notion; for he says he reads all the wise men of old, and knows there's no such thing; but may be the world is worse than it was, for too sure there are ghosts now-a-days.—So, Sir, as I was saying, I cried myself to sleep, not thinking, Lord he knows, of a ghost, but a good-for-

nothitng,

nothing, false-hearted—but," bursting into tears, "I will not trouble your honour with my own misfortunes."—"No, do not just now, there's a good girl," returned her master.—"So, Sir, I waked up in a moment, with the notion of somebody pulling the bed-clothes:—so I spoke, in a snappish sort of a way, for I made sure it was a frolic of the maids; and I was heavy to sleep again, when, all of a sudden, the Lord protect us! there came, close to my ear, such a hollow groan!—I opened both my eyes wide in a moment, and though it is but a new moon, the nights are so light, that I saw"—"What? what?" in an agony of impatience re-echoed every voice.—"A tall, very tall, thin figure of a woman, holding open the curtains, and looking—oh dear! as if she had just stepped out of her coffin; and I gave such a squall!"—"Yes, as waked the whole house," cried Julia.—"But are you sure it was a woman?" without ceremony exclaim-

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ed all the terrified servants, because you know, when it appeared to Rees Howels"—"Oh!" interposed Mr. Pembroke, "let us have but one ghost at a time; and I thought just now we had only one, at least as our own peculiar property; for you called it, by way of distinction, *the* ghost; but, as Jenkin justly observes, why should you think you saw a woman, Lucas?"—"Oh! dear Sir, because she had on a long trailing dress of white, pinked all over like a shroud, and her cap was tied under her chin with a knot of white satin riband, as Miss Julia's is at this moment."—Henry could not resist a side glance at Julia's *coëffure*, and wondered how even a ghost should look ill in what made her look so uncommonly pretty.—Mr. Pembroke found that his inquiries had opened a vein of conversation which was new only to himself; nor did he think he had any probability of extending his own conviction to the rest of the company. Finding,

ing, therefore, that Lucas would not be left alone, the heads of the house retired to their own apartments; and all the female servants remained where they were, fortifying each other in their fears by an exact detail, in twenty various ways, of all the odd noises, singular figures, and supernatural incidents, which had caused the Castle of St. Hilary to remain so long untenanted; agreeing, at last, that it was a monstrous shame that Lady Trevallyn should cajole poor Mr. Pembroke into living here, without communicating what she probably had never heard—the miraculous legends of St. Hilary.

The poor frightened Lucas had, however, so bruised herself as to be confined to her bed for several days; during this time she never varied in her evidence, nor repeated it without trembling and horror; in consequence of which half the beds in the

the house were vacated, as the maids walked off in pairs, and the men stole into each other's rooms. After having made this social arrangement, oiled the locks, added new bolts, and in fact treated the ghost much as Londoners do an expected thief, the servants flattered themselves that the lady apparition was utterly excluded, and things fell into their usual train at St. Hilary.

As the time approached for the removal of the family, Mr. Pembroke now dispatched several of his own old servants to Farleigh, that all might be ready, should Lady Trevallyn agree to accompany Julia thither: and as she was daily expected, he considered what orders he had for the domestics around him: when the footman one morning brought breakfast into his study, where he usually took it alone, at a later hour than the young people, he bade that man send the butler to him. Mr. Pembroke,

broke, though in no hurry, thought that he must have employed one of Job's messengers: the bell again brought, however, the same servant.—"Did I not bid you send the butler to me?"—"Yes, your honour, I told Mr. Hopkins so, but he says as how he is busy and can't come."—"Well, if that is the case, Thomas will do—send him." Another long waiting ensued, followed by another application to the bell. The same man unwillingly answered. "Well, and where is Thomas?—Is he busy too?"—"Why, your honour, Thomas is the most busier of the two; for he is looking up all his things, to give an account of to Mr. Hopkins, who is calling over the plate."—"Well, Hopkins and Thomas are great plagues both, with their precise ways;—however, I can talk to the coachman the while—let Samuel come to me."—Alas! no Samuel appeared. Again the bell in a peal announced the wrath of the ringer; and

and again, with a face yet more dismayed, the same servant more slowly entered.—"Why you are all past tolerating!" exclaimed Mr. Pembroke angrily:—"must I go to my coachman, or my coachman come to me?"—"Why," cried the fellow, as if overjoyed at the proposal, "if your honour would be so good as to step to coachy, he will take it main kind; for his head's all of a confusion like, and he is in the harness-room, looking over the bridles and saddles."—"And pray, may I know how this sudden fit of exactness came over you all?"—"Why, your honour, as there is no sleeping in this house for any but you great quality, we poor folks cannot live by keeping our eyes always open, so please God, we all means to sleep out of it this blessed night."—"That's a civil intention, truly; and for what reason, I pray;"—"Why I know your honour wo'n't believe me; but last night, as I am a living man, we all saw the ghost!—Nay, pray

your

your honour, it is no laughing matter; for our Marget says the fright has turned one side of her hair all grey like a badger."—"Nay, if this is the case, I wish some of you may not be better acquainted with the tall thin lady than you chuse to own: but since she has found her way into the butler's pantry and the harness-room, in defence of my own property I shall summon the ghost into open court: go, and set the old justice's chair in the hall, where I order every creature that has seen this spirit to attend.—I should have left the aërial lady," concluded Mr. Pembroke with a laugh, "to glide about the garrets unmolested; but apparitions who pilfer spoons, and filch bridles, ought to be made examples of."

This tale, which at first appeared a jest of some kitchen wag, now wore the air of imposture in a wider extent; and excited at once Mr. Pembroke's contempt and displea-

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sure. He therefore resolved to sift all the parties, and convict the knaves on the evidence of the fools. His inquiry for Henry and his friend, who were on the mountains, brought Julia to him; who begged to be of his party, as the trial of a ghost promised to be new and entertaining. On entering the hall they found, it is true, the justice's chair, but not one creature attending. "I told you, my love, how it would be," cried Mr. Pembroke peevishly:—"numerous as our scared fools are, no two of them, you find, can agree in their account of this business. Why, where are you all?" concluded he, opening a door which led to the inner hall. —"Here, your honour!" replied a whole choir of discordant voices.—"And why do you not attend me where I ordered?"—"Oh Lord! your honour, do not ax us to come there," cried the coachman, just popping in a jolly round face, white as his close-curled wig with terror, "because—because"

—"Because what, fool?" cried his master—"Because, Lord forgive us all our sins! that is the purcise place the apparition do hold his revels in, as we all knows to our sorrow." "So it is a *he* after all.—Come in for a pack of fools, and I will ensure you from the company of the ghost, who will never venture into mine I think I can swear."—"Why, to be sure, I never heard as any thing have appeared to your honour yet; and I hope you will never be so misfortunate as to see any thing badder than yourself, as we poor souls have, worse luck is ours."—"Is that possible?" said Mr. Pembroke, smothering a pleasant smile:—"Come in, I tell you."

And now, holding each other's hand, as children do when playing thread my grandmother's needle, a whole set of gawky fellows crept slowly in; and by their number convinced Mr. Pembroke, that, unless he could quell the insurrection raised by the ghost,

ghost, he should not have one bumpkin left to saddle his horse or set his breakfast. Nor did the string consist merely of the men: last, as the most timid, followed all the maids; save Mrs. Lucas, whose testimony was fully established already, by her midnight tête-à-tête with the aërial visitant.—This long string of foolish and appalled faces so amused Mr. Pembroke, that he burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, which lengthened to ghastliness the countenances around him. "It was," they whispered one another, "so presumptuous!"—"Well," cried he, trying to recover himself, "which of this numerous assembly has seen the ghost?"—"Oh! all, all!" echoed the whole body.—"Indeed! then one ghost has, I find, more courage than my whole family. And pray where might he catch you all so pleasantly together?"—"Here in this very spot!" almost groaned a fellow, of a height and size to have recommended him to the king of

Prussia's tall regiment, while he stood quaking like a school-boy over whom the rod impends. Mr. Pembroke, rather seriously surprised, now demanded, "Is there any of my servants who did *not* see the ghost?"—"Only old Mrs. Sleaford," replied the butler, and she is always poring over the Bible, and Mr. Layton, your honour's own gentleman, and he says there is no such thing, for he is a philosopher of the new school, as he calls it, and a new school it is; for he says as how he understands mathephysicians, and reads Bacon:—for my part, I only eats him."—"And pray when did this apparition take you all thus by surprise?"—"Exactly at twelve, last night:—we can't mistake the hour," returned the butler with a sagacious nod, "we all know it for a very particular reason."—"And if your reason, Hopkins, is not a profound secret, be so obliging as to impart it to your master." The butler pursed up his mouth importantly, and fixed his eyes

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with peculiar meaning on a rosy wench, who hid her face directly with her apron. During this inquiry, it had struck Mr. Pembroke, that, however the philosopher of the new school might meditate mischief in the family, it could not be of a ghostly kind; for he, it was plain, had denied the existence of spirits, and had been sent the morning before to a town at such a distance that he was not yet returned; and must bring some papers which would prove that he went, consequently he would be acquitted of the imposture. This meditative silence on both sides gave a serious air to the business. Among the servants, it was obvious that something was to be told, which impeached somebody; and honour to each other seemed to preclude sincerity to their master. Luckily Mr. Pembroke just then recollected, that mercy is the better part of justice.—"Come, my lads," said he, "I see that you have all had a dreadful fright; and

so I will not be angry at any prank which has brought with it so severe a punishment —speak out." This amnesty, however, encouraged not any one to become spokesman. "Hopkins," resumed Mr. Pembroke, after a pause, "I know you for a sensible man—tell me what brought you altogether in this hall at so late an hour last night." Hopkins turned an eye of self importance towards the sheepish fellows around him, which said, you see how well our master knows how to distinguish a man of merit; and clearing his harsh voice, began—"Why, please your honour, the wisest of us all are fools sometimes, as you will say of your humble servant, when I tells the whole story. Evan, our groom, goes a sweethearting to—Lord, Win, don't blush, and look so foolish—master, and miss Julee, has more sense than to think it a crime to have a mind to be married.—You must know, Sir, that Evan has hung back a little, and we all found out—

that

that I shall not tell—no matter how—we all found out as how Win was to go, last night, into the garden, to sow hemp-seed." —"And to all human appearance the most useful thing she could have sown in my garden," sarcastically observed Mr. Pembroke; "but how came this to enter her head?"—A rising tee-hee ended in a stifled sort of universal groan, and a fearful "Lord have mercy upon us!"—"Bless your honour!" continued Hopkins, "why I thought every child knowed that:—she was to go out exactly as the clock struck twelve, and throw the seed over her right shoulder—no her left—was it her right or her left?"—"Prithee get on, and let her throw it over both shoulders rather than fail."—"Well then, she was to throw it over *one* of her shoulders, we wo'n't say which, and then she would be to see the man she is to marry, coming after her with a scythe in his hand."—"A scythe!" interrupted Mr. Pembroke; "a ring I should have

have thought more to the purpose."—"So we fancied, your honour, as how it would be fine fun if Evan, his own self, would go out; and Owens offered him the lent of his scythe: but Evan was so hen-hearted that we could not work him up to it, and it is God's mercy we did not, for I am afraid it will go hard with the poor lad as it is, he takes on so. Desperate bad he has been all night, and says as how it is a judgement on him, and that Win saw his own apparition; when, Lord, he knows the figure was no more like him than an apple's like an oyster."—"Truce with your similitudes, good Mr. Witwou'd," said Mr. Pembroke, significantly smiling at Julia, "and get on with your tale. You very prudently then, I find, set my gates open at midnight; and I may be glad that nothing worse than a ghost came."—"Why, Sir, there was no chance of any thing else coming, nor that neither; or, icod, we would have shut the gates fast enough:

enough: but we were all full of fun, for, being Midsummer eve, I had handed about a little of the best ale, your honour; and not a soul of us all once thought of the ghost—that is, not the real ghost; and you will say that is the more wonder, as we axed him in a manner to frighten us; and, to do him justice, he did not need to be axed twice. Well, as I was a saying, we were all *perdue*, peeping through the crevice there of our own hall-door, for I had put out the lamp within, and left the little one burning here on purpose; and bye and bye we sees poor Win creeping along, with the seed in her apron, and one hand holding it ready:—so what does we all do, John, and Thomas, Coachy, Owens, Evan, Rees Howels, Jenkin, and all the maidens, but steal out, and divide behind the gates, as they were thrown back—that we might sally forth upon our Win, and make fun of her. Presently we heard the poor soul pant-

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ing, and running, as if the devil was behind her, as indeed he was; and when we all jumped out, she was so deadly flustered that she dropped down, as though she had no life in her: and while we were in a puzzle what this could mean, we heard an odd heavy underground sort of a noise as if a waggon were a coming in.—Lord, I thought every soul of us would have swounded, like poor Win!—for, sure enough, we all remembered, too late, that we had been playing with edge tools, as the saying is.—Tall Thomas happened to be first, and he was as weak—as weak as a thread paper, so down he fell; and all of us after him, just like a pack of cards when you send the jack of an errand."—"So, after I have listened to your preaching all this time, I find that you saw only the set of fools whom I now see," said their master. "Ay, marry did we," exclaimed the whole tribe;—we saw a tall, tall outlandish horrible figure, just

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in the first porch—he had eyes like two flambeaux, and would have made six of our coachy, fat as he is.—Oh, Lord! how we trembled, prayed, and hid our faces. He went round the hall with the same unsufferable lumbering noise, and as slow as King Pepin in the puppet-show, only he did not carry his head under his arm; and after that he very coolly stepped up into his place again. To be sure, we were all rare ninnies when we came into the hall not to take notice that he was gone out of it."—"His place!" cried Mr. Pembroke, gazing around, without being able to guess at their meaning; "where, pray, might this big gentleman's place be?"—"Why, *there*, Sir," cried Magos the handsome dairy-maid, in a shrill pipe, that might have frightened the ghost, as it did her master.—"*There*, Sir!" was echoed by the whole train; and, turning round, Mr. Pembroke saw their trembling fingers were all pointed towards a grim gigantic

gantic stone statue of an ancient Briton, who had a counterpart on the other side to support a well-carved oaken-gallery, which had once been the seat of the minstrels and harpers, when the feast of knighthood was held in this hall. The outrageous superstition and extravagance of the servants entirely overpowered the gravity of Mr. Pembroke and his daughter; while the whole train, shocked at this new provocation to their midnight visitant, knelt around, and offered to take their oaths that they saw the figure mount up there again—while their appalled faces showed an expectation that they should be justified by the descent of one or other of the fierce Britons, from whom they never long removed their eyes.

Mr. Pembroke would have concluded the men drunk, if men only had been the parties; but the vehement declarations of the women perplexed him. With all the mild-

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ness of reason, when it condescends to ignorance, he argued on the improbability that disembodied spirits should be permitted to quit a state of either blessedness or punishment, only to add to our follies or our fears; and still more how incompatible such a reunion of our separated natures would be, when we know the grosser part to have become dust and bones, and the customary garments in which fancy enwraps its own vision are always indisputably under lock and key, in some chest or wardrobe. To this rational representation, modified, as Mr. Pembroke supposed, to the capacities of his auditors, no one attempted to give any answer. "He was," they all cried, "very wise, and very good, and, well they knowed, never did any thing that should prevent *his* resting in his grave, but that was not the case with some folks; and if he knew half the tales they did about this old castle, he would not wonder."—"If ever I know any thing to the prejudice of the

the dead," interrupted Mr. Pembroke authoritatively, "one of that body shall rise to tell it me."—"Well," they all cried, they had nothing more to say; but, for their parts, they had rather live in a barn, and have it all to themselves, than in a castle full of gold and diamonds, if they must pop on a ghost, or a goblin, at every corner: therefore, if his honour pleased, they were all ready to go."

At any other time Mr. Pembroke would, in mere vexation, have indulged them, and posted away to Farleigh by himself; but while in hourly expectation of Lady Trevallyn, it was impossible that he should leave St. Hilary. For could he affront her with the information that his servants had dragged, in imagination, her ancestors from the grave, and circulated reports always odious, and frequently injurious?—Should he be able to quiet this one alarm, he thought it probable that he should either

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trace the rick—for a trick he fully believed it—to the right author, or quit the scene of action before the ghost had courage again to come forward. He therefore resolved to try a last experiment with the obstinate ignorant race around him. "Well then," concluded he, "since I cannot convince any of you, I do not wish that you should remain here in apprehension:—as to the poor foolish girl whose hempen spell conjured up a phantom which I wish had its produce round his neck, it is not fair that she should lose her place, and her husband too; so tell Evan if he has a mind to make a match with Win, I will give them five guineas to begin the world with." This bounty of five guineas electrified the whole family:—each eye forsook the statues, on which all had been hitherto intently fixed, to consult that of the person it liked best; and Coachy edging up to the cook, who receded not, observed, that, "since his honour was so generous to Win, who made

them

them all give up their places, by running husband-hunting at twelve o'clock at night, he hoped that he would remember other folks might like to be married quite as well as Evan." Mr. Pembroke half smiled at his own ingenuity; and hinting, that if they would all marry, and live well together in their places, every pair should have the same compliment, a few words settled the matter; and couple after couple, with a nod (the respectful salutation of that country), walked off: till only Magos, the dairy-maid, who had always been the beauty of her own circle, remained; and that merely because she held herself so high; for tall Thomas passionately implored her to take him and the five guineas. To be left alone was however more than her spirits could long stand.—" To pe sure," she said, " cee little treamt ven cee refused my Lord Trefallyn's valie, and Tavy Jones the sop-keeper, and Mr. Auprey's own clerk, cee soud ever take up with a footman:—how-

sever, a lifing husbant was petter tan a ted gost at any time, so cee thanked his honour," and, with Thomas, added to the matrimonial cavalcade. Julia, retiring, congratulated her father on so ingeniously making every one forget the ghost. He might have said, except himself, and poor Lucas; who, from her fright, and being crossed in love, seemed to be in the way of increasing the family of ghosts at St. Hilary.

Peace being now restored in the parlour, and Hymen reigning in the hall, Mr. Pembroke looked out impatiently, as evening came on, for Henry and his friend, to advise with them on the best means of detecting this daring imposture. Being told that on coming in they had adjourned to the library, Mr. Pembroke sought them there. The nature of Cary had been softened by a day of almost unremitting attention from Henry; and, when he heard that Mr. Pembroke

wished him to stay, and consult with them on a point of importance, he attempted not, as usual, to retire. After Henry had heard his father's account of the general alarm, and its supposed cause, he cast a look of deep chagrin upon Julia, and compassion towards Cary; well knowing, that to discuss the invisible world would wake to him "the nerve where agony is born." It happened, however, that, at this juncture, the mind of the interesting visionary had taken the high and solemn tone which always impressed on those around him a native grandeur, and firmness of character, calculated to enforce his opinions, which he had a fund of observation and reading to support. Far from adopting Mr. Pembroke's idea, that this was an imposture among the domestics, the veteran enlarged on the possible intelligence of one world with the other, in a flow of eloquence and information which Mr. Pembroke had seldom or ever heard; and with an almost divine complacency. Awe-struck with his

elevated

elevated visitant, the moment that gentleman chose to be known, Mr. Pembroke no longer was surprised that the young heart of Henry, yet in the glow and energy of passion, should unfold itself in the warmest affection to a being before whom he almost bowed. The sweet Julia, drawing her chair closer to her brother's, whispered him, that she wished they had been so vulgar as to have danced among the happy hymeneal party; for this glorious friend of his had strangely shaken her nerves, if not her understanding. Henry, who best knew the wild charm which a disordered mind gives to whatever it can at all connect, still recommended the considering the whole ghostly business as a trick; unless they should have, in their own persons, any cause to think otherwise: and since the hall was the scene of apparition action, instead of going to bed, he proposed, that his father, Mr. Benson, and his friend Cary, should, with himself, secretly assemble there at midnight; and

throwing the gate open, leave a lamp burning, while they sat in silence and darkness within the dining-parlour: thus the figure, if palpable to touch, should, if they saw it, be the most frightened of the company. To this plan none of the gentlemen objected; and, for that night, and two following ones, they watched, but in vain:—all continued profoundly quiet. They then agreed, that Cupid must have taken in masquerade the figure of the enormous Briton; and Hymen, in the shape of Mr. Aubrey, had laid the spirit.

On the day before Lady Trevallyn was to arrive at St. Hilary, Mr. Pembroke began to fear that he should not, as he had purposed, leave it in her company; for some little cold which his midnight watching had given him, occasioned those flying twinges of the gout that usually fore-ran a serious fit. The partiality he had for the society of the sprightly widow made the ap-

proach of this malady particularly vexatious: to drive off the apprehended evil, he took a medicine which sometimes had that effect, and retired early to his own apartment. In his restless irritable state, Henry became the sole object of his thoughts: such is the power of conscience, destined thus to counteract error by an equal sway in the heart with its fondest feeling. Yet had he exerted every effort to discover the remarkable spot on which he had saved the half-drowned child, in vain. Whether he should venture to communicate this circumstance to the youth, or whether such a confession would not wholly attach him to Cary, for whom already he showed a reverence and affection equal to that which he, when thought his father, obtained, were questions often agitated in Mr. Pembroke's bosom, but never decided. After lying awake till he found himself feverish and exhausted, he dropt into a sleep, heavy but not refreshing. In the dead of night, he was roused from it

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by a groan, so deep and hollow, that it seemed to issue from a soul in torture. The remembrance of the awful discourse on life, death, and immortality, in the library the other evening, flashed with all the force of powerful but disjointed ideas across his mind—his pulses beat in a manner audibly—his spirits faltered—his limbs were without motion:—in a room that communicated with his own his valet always slept, and a lamp was burning there, which, through the door which stood ajar, cast only a faint and streaming light across a part of his chamber. He now, though with an appalled and trembling hand, drew aside the bed-curtain, when a figure, all in white, seemed as it were to grow out of the floor to an amazing height:—sight and hearing instantly deserted Mr. Pembroke; and, when he at length recovered both, he fixed his eyes on Henry, who, with his valet, was holding him; while Julia, half undrest, stood bathing his temples with hartshorn and other

other volatiles. With bewildered looks he gazed around, but had presence of mind enough not to declare his cause of alarm. He only inquired who had waked his son and daughter, and how they came there. Layton said, "that he had been startled with his groans, and hastened to call Mr. Henry: Miss Julia heard his voice, for he was obliged to speak very loud to the young gentleman through the door, and was so frightened that she would come too." "Did you find my door open or shut?" inquired Mr. Pembroke with a trembling voice, and anxious glance around. "Shut, Sir, I think —I was in such an alarm I really cannot be sure how I found it." "Consider a moment —it is of great importance." Henry, by an expressive look, conveyed to Julia the fear that their father was certainly delirious. "No—no," sighed Mr. Pembroke, shaking his head, "I am as rational as you are—I heard it as plainly as I did the rustle of

these

these damask curtains, when I drew them aside to look at it." "What, my dear—dear father, did you hear?" exclaimed Julia. "Nothing, my sweet girl—go to bed—you will get a sad cold." Henry, however, would not quit his father till commanded; and then made Layton watch by his bed-side in the arm chair: a greater trial could hardly have been devised for this philosopher of the new school; as Mr. Pembroke, who ever till now had disbelieved in the return of spirits, had certainly indirectly owned having seen one. Neither he nor his master could close an eye during the remainder of the night, though wholly unmolested. "Poor harmless wretches!" said Mr. Pembroke to himself, while recalling the terror of his servants, "how I laughed at, and discredited your report; yet why to you should the dead return?—you never stole—you never basely appropriated the child of other parents.—Alas! those whom

I vainly

I vainly have sought in this world, were early sent, perhaps, by broken hearts, to the other; and now hover round me and the noble boy whom they can no longer claim."

With day-light, however, the vigour of the mind, to a certain degree, always returns. That Mr. Pembroke had heard and seen something he was assured; but as he could hardly shape into any form the indistinct image which yet soared before his eyes, the possibility of imposture again recurred. Magnanimously resolving to impute to himself the weakness he had censured in others, he ordered his chamber-door to be left unfastened, that he might take his chance for another visitation: which, thus prepared for, he thought he should encounter with manly courage.

Mr. Pembroke's taciturnity to his family, however, availed not; for Layton had, early

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in the morning, published an account of his groans, his wild inquiries, and the long reveries in which he still was plunged. "Master, himself, has seen the spirit then"—"that comes of being fool-hardy"—"I wonder whether he spoke to it,"—was the whisper of one servant to another: while all, with anxious inquiring eyes, examined the pale and pensive countenance that no longer heeded them. The shock of the night had, however, relieved Mr. Pembroke from present danger of the gout; for at the sound of Lady Trevallyn's carriage, Henry was hardly quicker in the offer of assistance than his father. "I have a hand for an old friend, and another for a new one," cried she, extending a pair, white as snow, to Mr. Pembroke and Henry, which the latter respectfully kissed, in token of his gratitude for her offered friendship. "Julia, my dear, I have a hundred embraces for you.—I hope," she added, in an audible

whisper,

whisper, "that you have made up your mind to letting me be your sister-in-law, though you were so ill-natured that you would not have me for a step-mother: I really believe that I shall never be able to get down my abominable frightful native mountain in any other conveyance than a chariot drawn by doves; and as they are apt to mistake their way, I think yonder fine black-eyed Henry of yours—Henry, I think you call him?—must undertake to guide them." That youth, who found himself already enchanted with the intelligent countenance, elegant figure, and prepossessing manners of the lively widow, was wholly won by the affectionate caresses she lavished on his sister. As Mr. Pembroke led her into the saloon, she turned aside a moment, to lean upon Julia's shoulder; then dashing away the tears with which her sweet eyes were surcharged, she reached out her hand to Henry. "Come, you creature,

ture, be but half as agreeable as you look, and I will endeavour to lose the painful remembrance of many a scene long past, and many a friend for ever vanished:—but every object I look on brings so much to my mind" —Again she swept away the tears with her white hand, as if she would not be a fatigue to her friends; and running to Julia's harp, struck a chord.—" Oh you sophisticated mountaineer!—a French harp in the land of David!—How do you think Taliessen, Modred, and the rest of the brethren, who sit in the clouds above here, will take the compliment?—Come, let me try if it will give me one native strain for the genius of our mountain;" and with exquisite skill and taste, she played—" Of a noble race was Shenkin."

Pleasure and affection, in all their beauteous iris hues, diversified the hours to the younger part of the company, while Mr. Pembroke

Pembroke blended delight with a gnawing recollection of what he ought to do, and what he might have to dread. His silence and abstraction suddenly suggested to the delicate mind of Lady Trevallyn, that she had not been as attentive to him as she used to be when Henry was far away. Starting up, she seized the chess-board, and with this idea, placing it on the table by which Mr. Pembroke sat—"Now will I lay my life, papa, by that air of gravity, you fancy I have done flirting with you, since I have got this fine young fellow to amuse me—not at all—you shall find that I intend to keep you both in play. To show my amazing regard, and how often I have thought of you since we parted at Bath, I made an idle wretch, in that idle town, teach me so much of this game, that I shall beat you most unmercifully if you do not look about you—so be upon your guard." Sitting down at once to chess, she made gay signs to Henry and Julia, that speech on

her part would be treason; while Mr. Pembroke gladly engaged with such a charming opponent in the amusement which most withdrew his thoughts from one dear but oppressive subject.

Henry had, from the moment of Lady Trevallyn's arrival, impatiently expected the coming home of Cary, that he might dispose him to please, and be pleased, with their fair guest, who already was curious to see that youth's hermit friend: with the close of evening he usually returned; but it could hardly be said to close at all, so brightly rose the moon, now at its full. Julia took her work-basket, and whispered Henry, that in so sweet a night it would be delightful for him to walk and meet their solitary friend:—fain, fain, would he have had her company, but politeness obliged her to stay at home. Thinking no spot so likely by this light, and at this hour, to attract a visionary as the ruined priory, Henry

bent

bent his steps thither; but, though its solemn beauty charmed one sense, and the profusion of plants and flowers, which abounded there, gratified another, it was not the haunt of Cary. Sighing that Julia was not his companion, the youth wandered onward.

The ruins of the priory were of great extent, beside that part which had been so sweetly embellished, and carefully preserved by the lords of St. Hilary: they ended in the village; whither Henry now betook himself: for though society was shunned by Cary, poverty he constantly sought, and relieved with an unsparing hand, as though it held the widow's cruise of oil. Henry called to mind that his friend had returned home for the address of a maimed labourer, who had sent in the morning to ask aid at the Castle. The sufferer he easily found, and assisted; but heard no tidings of Cary. Having in a vain search protracted his own stay as long as he thought he could, without

being

being deficient in politeness to his father's guest, the youth turned to hasten home through the shortest path. This led by the parish church, which, though long since separated from the priory, proved that they had once been united by imperfect fragments of massy walls which every where presented irregular projections, overgrown with ivy, that alone held, or appeared to hold the tottering and ragged abutments together. Suddenly Henry missed a little favourite dog of Julia's, whom he had courted to follow him; and calling aloud, the creature ran out of the porch of the church; but as quickly ran back again. Invited by a bright moon, and a door half open, Henry followed:—a bold projection of the ivy-bound wall left the chief part of the church in solemn shadow; but that only gave effect to the radiant beams of the moon, as aslant, from a painted window over the communion table, they shone full on a recumbent figure, which Henry at first concluded

cluded to be marble; on a second glance he perceived it to be Cary, who was lying negligently at his length upon the slab of a raised tomb, with his elbow resting on that, and his head on his hand. The injured arm lay over the neck of one faithful spaniel, who, like a conscious favourite, with eyes fondly fixed on his master, had crept almost into his bosom; while his companion, with equal, but humbler devotion, remained couched at his feet. That fine care-worn countenance which Henry's eyes ever loved to contemplate, was solemnly inclined upward. The sound of approaching steps made him, by a hasty turn of his head, throw back those grey locks that hung in their usual "careless desolation," and the moon-beam gemmed the tear which he hastily dashed from his cheek, while his eyes struck fire at the intrusion. Henry was shocked—he stopped reverentially, and gazed as though on a man of other days—a vision of the mournful sons of Ossian.—

Hardly could he resist the impulse to fall at the feet of so singular, so grand a creature. Cary, when he saw the intruder, started up abruptly, and walked away with him.—"You will discover all my haunts in time," said he, in a broken moody kind of voice;—"I was always fond of a church by moonlight." Henry was too well acquainted with the usual tone of his friend's mind in scenes like this, and felt too much awe in his own, abruptly to propose introducing him to a social party; where, if he added not to the gaiety, he must infallibly cast a gloom.—He therefore led to the invitation by speaking of the lively and elegant Lady Trevallyn; declaring that he had never seen so fascinating a creature; and regretting that she was a dozen years older than himself, as the only reason why he was not wholly enchained by her. He then came upon his commission, and urged his mournful friend to attend to the entreaties of Julia, and join the party.—"What can be so

natural

natural as your finding a handsome lively woman pleasant company?" sighed the veteran, wringing affectionately the hand of Henry:—"go—enjoy the charms of life while yet it has charms; but remember, dear lad, our compact in America; and do not, from mistaken kindness, insist upon my being happy any other way than my own." He was near a deep thicket when he spoke, and turned into it abruptly; nor did Henry venture to pursue him.

The sound of the piano-forte, and harp, made Henry, on re-entering, sensible that he must have been wanted. His clarionet was produced,—the candles were put out,—and to the light of the moon they had what Lady Trevallyn called "a dear romantic concert," where memory gave one part, and taste the other. The castle clock chimed twelve before any of the party were tired; but Lady Trevallyn then suddenly cried out on Julia for keeping town hours;

and declared that she had never sat up so late in this part of the world before.

Mr. Pembroke ordered his chamber-door, as he had pre-determined, to be left unfastened, and bade his valet retire to his own room; who, in spite of the philosophy of the new school, would not have been sorry to have joined the happy hymeneal party, and had a spouse of his own, either to share or to relieve his fears. Although not disturbed by any visionary visitant, Mr. Pembroke descended in the morning worn out with restlessness, and condoled with Lady Trevallyn on seeing by her swoln eyes and pale cheeks, that she had not rested better. "I had but a poor chance of sleeping here, my kind friend," returned she, "at any rate; and that I lost by the idle prate of your servants to mine. I find you have conjured up frightful and strange stories concerning our poor old mansion,—mortifying ones to me.—No," added she,

sighing,

sighing, and turning her thoughts inward, "we are an unfortunate, but not guilty family: and it is dreadful thus to rake up the ashes of the honoured dead."

Mr. Pembroke, incensed at the intolerable impertinence of his servants, sought to soothe her wounded feelings. "Ah! my dear Sir," said she, with a melancholy smile, "how shall we seal up the loquacious lips of those who can never know the truth, and are, therefore, so fruitful in invention?—I can only shorten my visit." Julia then acknowledged that the whole family had staid at St. Hilary merely to receive it; and pressed the charming widow to accompany her to Farleigh. Lady Trevallyn saw that to deny was to involve her friends in the censure which she cast on their servants, and therefore acquiesced. "One visit here I must, however, pay," said Lady Trevallyn, "and only one.—I can go to good Mr. Aubrey almost directly; and then,

my

my sweet girl, let us immediately leave this hateful place; which was the scene of much suffering during my youth, and will become a cause of contention to the last hour of my life.—Ah, Julia! you too have a great fortune; but your wise father will not do as mine did, who threw his daughter away merely to save that:—he married me when I was little more than a child, only for fear I should be capable of the delicacy of choice; and Lord Trevallyn almost forgot that I was ever to be out of my nonage. Time made me a woman, and my husband made me a wretched one: — he never treated me with confidence or kindness; and always expected that a new gown, or a kiss, should appease all the pangs of a generous and tender heart, when it found itself unvalued. In reality, he had married me only to unite the two finest estates in the county,—but my poor father at last grievously disappointed him, by settling this upon my second son; from whom the elder,

elder, possessed by his guardians with the idea that he was wronged in the arrangement, threatens to claim it, as soon as he comes of age: and, what is worse, my lawyers say that he can carry the suit, which will leave my sweet Cecil pennyless. But this is a wretched way of passing our time, my Julia; and if I frighten you into a vow of celibacy, I shall have a legion of lovers in arms against me."

Miss Pembroke, finding that they were almost immediately to depart for Farleigh, left it to her father to accompany Lady Trevallyn to Mr. Aubrey's, that she might give due orders through the family: and Henry, by a hint of hers, set out on an uncertain peregrination after Cary; whom he was anxious to apprise of this hasty determination, and induce him to accept the invitation of Mr. Pembroke to Farleigh.

Although Mr. Pembroke did not hesitate

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to escort Lady Trevallyn to the parsonage, the rector was to him a stranger. Age and infirmity had long prevented Mr. Aubrey from visiting at St. Hilary, and Mr. Pembroke had a chaplain of his own who officiated at the castle. But how greatly did that gentleman regret having been governed by a mere ceremony, when he saw the interesting venerable rector of St. Hilary; who, bowed by age, raised his silvered head with a patriarchal dignity, as by the assistance of a stick he got out of his armchair affectionately to welcome Lady Trevallyn. She sank gracefully at his knees, as to those of a revered parent, in silent tenderness; while a mutual gush of sensibility, too poignant for words, made Mr. Pembroke feel his presence to be oppressive to them. He therefore opened a glass door, and passed into a small, but beautiful flower-garden, which conducted to a second, filled with roots and vegetables. Beyond both he saw a paddock with a cow; and

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an old orchard invited him on the other hand.

The period which had elapsed since Mr. Aubrey and Lady Trevallyn had seen each other, gave both much to learn and to communicate; but hardly had they entered on an interesting subject, before dismal outcries for help came from the orchard. Mr. Aubrey could hardly move, and the lady would have been of no use. The servants, who luckily were attending with Mr. Pembroke's coach, ran, on hearing the cries, nimbly onward; and, to the horror of those in the parlour, returned almost as hastily; bearing Mr. Pembroke streaming with water, and wholly insensible. Lady Trevallyn entreated that they would bring the body into the parsonage; but, conforming to the orders of Cary, who was following them, the servants carried the lifeless Mr. Pembroke to his own coach; into which the veteran, equally wet, jumped, and it drove rapidly away

away to the castle. The alarmed Lady Trevallyn took a hasty leave of Mr. Aubrey, to follow on foot, attended by his servant.

Before she could arrive there, Julia was in a state little short of distraction. Henry and Cary she soon understood to be employed in stripping the body, and using whatever means might restore it to life.—The latter, inured to the contingencies and inconveniences of the world, was always prepared for them. He, therefore, produced a lancet, and instantly opened a vein in Mr. Pembroke's arm; which bled, though with difficulty. Henry hastened to lighten with this news the apprehensions of Julia, and anxiously implored Lady Trevallyn to sustain the sorrowing daughter.—The activity, recollection, and tenderness of Cary, had done almost every thing that could be done for Mr. Pembroke before the doctor and surgeon arrived. But, alas! a misfortune

fortune had happened of which Cary could not be aware. The chill of the water, into which Mr. Pembroke had by accident slipped, united with the gout flying about in his habit to produce a paralytic seizure, from which it was possible that he might recover, but merely possible: his speech was totally gone.—What an unexpected affliction was this for his children!—what a surprise to his servants! who found in this event a confirmation of all their extravagant notions; and not one now doubted but that the various visitations of the ghost were fore warnings of the present calamity.

Julia and Henry now united to implore Lady Trevallyn, since it was obvious that she could neither share their duty, nor lighten their sorrows, to consider her own immediate comfort, by quitting this detested castle, into which Julia, in bitterness of anguish, every moment exclaimed, she had brought her father only to die. But they did

did not yet know the warm and generous heart of that Lady, who scorned to indulge a selfish pride or feeling, where friendship was concerned: and, useless as she must be, and odious as she found the place, she determined upon remaining at St. Hilary, that she might share the anxieties which she was not able to relieve.

A long, long night passed away in medical and vain experiments; while the streaming eyes of the kneeling Julia were ever fixed upon the almost motionless orbs of her father, in which she vainly sought recognition.

In the course of the following day Mr. Pembroke came enough to himself to recollect his deeply-afflicted children, as by looks, and vain efforts to speak, he showed. A few hours more made his consciousness of the imperfection of his organs a misery indeed, for he struggled perpetually for utterance;

ance; especially when he turned to Henry, who duteously was stationed on one side of his bed, as Julia was on the other. The hand of his daughter he clasped incessantly in his cold and clammy one, as if no feeling but a dying fondness remained towards her; while on Henry he fixed looks of such eager, sad, and anxious intelligence, that the youth involuntarily laboured with the sense of some unrevealed event immediately concerning himself.—Oh! what fervent prayers did he put up, that the sufferer might be able to tell him the secret, though both were to die one hour after. Julia, however melancholy her situation, had only a father to lose—Henry felt that in his father he was to lose his fate.

On the third morning, when, worn out with watching, and utterly without hope, the two young people were, as usual, listening to the disturbed breathing of their father, they suddenly heard his well-known voice

imperfectly

imperfectly say, "Who is there?"—'Your children! your miserable children!' both answered on their knees, while they bathed his hands with their tears in a moment. He cast a fond parental glance on their haggard looks and soiled habiliments; well knowing how to estimate that affection which would not allow them to leave him for an hour.—"My beloved children," faltered the good man, "life is always brief,—mine has in one moment nearly flown from me; nor know I now whether Heaven will leave me another. I have much to do; and must do it well. Let me immediately discharge my mind of its greatest duty. I am sorry that Mr. Benson is already gone to Farleigh; but, infirm as Mr. Aubrey is, I hope he will come and officiate on this melancholy occasion. The state I am in warrants the request; and, till he arrives, leave only a servant in my room, that my agitated feelings may not rob me of due recollection."

Oh!

Oh! with what gratitude to Heaven did Julia impart to Lady Trevallyn, and Henry to Cary, this favourable change. The veteran had not once left his apartment since the sad accident by which Mr. Pembroke must have perished, had he not been roused to exertion. The place was among his haunts; and, on seeing that gentleman reel into the water, he instantly plunged in himself; nor could a man less strong, or less courageous, have borne him up so long, or called so loudly for help.

Painful as the venerable Aubrey found the religious summons, he felt obedience to be his duty; and he had long learned to conquer every emotion inconsistent with that. He found Lady Trevallyn seated at the bedside of Mr. Pembroke, and the two young people devoutly kneeling: all three, with due reverence, and tearful anxiety, united in the holy rite, which, with determined sanctity, the infirm Aubrey administered.

nistered. A short pause the sick man afterwards required, to collect himself;—he then ordered his whole train of servants to be summoned, who, now persuaded that he was the culprit who had roused the dead from their graves, crept in with fear and trembling—wondering what crime he had to confess. Mr. Pembroke cast his eyes over the group, when, not perceiving Cary, he desired to have him called. Henry foresaw it to be possible that he might not, so summoned, attend; and therefore engaged to invite the veteran himself:—even he did not seem likely to succeed; for though, where he could be of use, Cary would have contended with the elements to effect his purpose, where he could not be of any he held it an oppression to be urged to appear. Henry, however, so implored him, that he yielded to weakness, not reason, and followed the youth. Lady Trevallyn, as they entered, cast a curious eye on the sun-burnt visage of the stranger; but he gave her op-

portunity

portunity for nothing more, by abruptly hastening to a corner of the room yet darker than the rest, where he might witness all that passed, without becoming himself a party.

Mr. Pembroke, apparently much revived by the pious duty which he had recently performed, attentively surveyed the anxious and inquisitive faces surrounding his bed, and more articulately began:—"The solemn rite, my friends, by which I have just sealed my faith in a better world, and made my peace in this, will, I hope, fully convince every person present, that, though my organs of speech are not perfect, I am in full possession of my understanding: a general conviction of this is necessary, to give credence to a painful and extraordinary disclosure which I have for some time meditated, but may no longer be silent upon, lest an important secret should suddenly go down to the grave with me."—He paused, as

 wanting

wanting breath; but his eye had been too intently fixed on Henry to leave any doubt either in the bosom of the youth, or in those of the spectators, that the secret, whatever it might be, related solely to him. Was it happiness or misery? thought Henry—an ague shook him at the mighty question of his own soul. He had come round to kneel by Julia's side, that he might save the sick man turning from one to the other; and now, as if to ascertain his hold on Mr. Pembroke's affection, he eagerly divided with Julia the fond parental grasp of the cold hand, or thus enfolding hers with it, sought perhaps to make an equal claim to both.—"The circumstance with which my soul labours is so singular, so unexpected," slowly resumed the sick man, "and its consequence will so astonish——" He had overstrained his newly recovered and weak powers, nor could he utter another syllable. Expectation sat on the sharp arch of every brow:—a single breath drawn might have been heard,

and each person present hung on tiptoe over the one before him. A little cordial was given to revive the invalid, and he again pursued his discourse. "Henry, my dear Henry, it is you who must now fortify your mind;—for I am under the direful necessity of, at last, solemnly and publicly declaring that you are no son of mine." A deadly paleness increased for a moment in the complexions both of Henry and Julia; when a glance which each half-raised, and neither wholly ventured to fix on the other, enriched their cheeks alike with a bloom that sweetly interpreted the emotion within. Julia then dropped her eyes on the ground, and Henry turned his with deep intenseness on those of his languid friend, as though he would through them drag forth the discovery which his failing speech thus painfully prolonged. "Imagine not, beloved Henry," continued Mr. Pembroke, "that it was to lower your pride, or wound your feelings, I meditated this acknowledgement:

ment:—it is a relief that I feel obliged to give to my own conscience; and I, at this awful moment, call the God, whose mercy I have supplicated, to witness that I never saw your mother—that you came a helpless stranger to these arms, and therefore can be no son of mine:—but I have told you this, my Henry, only to make you so."

A burst of delight, even to agony, that overflowed the bosom of the youth, as he fell in a manner prostrate before his boundless benefactor, was too mighty for both. Mr. Pembroke, when a little recovered, drew his daughter fondly towards him, and tenderly whispered—"I have for some time guessed at my Julia's objection to matrimony—has she any now?" The subdued, but soul-touched Julia, lifted her modest eyes from the bed-clothes, in which dread and uncertainty had caused her to bury them, and her look made the gracious inclination of her head needless. By an irresistible

resistible impulse Henry caught her in his arms, and her cheek found a sweeter resting place on his shoulder; while the fond father made an effort to seal, with his blessing, those sacred, those delightful vows, which each beating heart was for the first time making to the other. "I have been aware that this moment would soon arrive for some weeks past," said Mr. Pembroke, to the venerable clergyman, "though I foresaw not the awful circumstance which was likely to have shut me for ever from my portion of delight. Take this, Sir," and he gave Mr. Aubrey a special license:—"open again your holy book, and immediately unite the hands of this young couple—now, while I have life to give them to each other."

Henry, at a hearing so blessed, sprung from his knees, as though light enough to soar to Heaven; and eagerly raising, with most

most endearing tenderness, the abashed and trembling Julia, turned with an imploring air towards Lady Trevallyn, who kindly advanced to support her. From that fair friend's finger he softly drew her wedding ring, which his fond eyes contemplated in unspeakable rapture. The aged Aubrey once more arose, and, assuming his surplice, opened at the marriage ceremony. What a moment!—The sick man again devoutly raised his head—the servants sunk in solemn silence upon their knees—and Cary, at some little distance, stood up with that impressive air of dignity by which he, when himself, was always distinguished, while he shook disdainfully from his cheek the indubitable mark of an incurable sensibility yet melting at his heart.

A few, a very few minutes, to the astonishment even of the immediate parties, united for ever two lovers, who one hour

before

before had never breathed a sound like impassioned tenderness, although in secret they mutually had consecrated to celibacy the heart which neither dared give to the other. Oh! how sweet were the blended tears of gratitude and delight, that each poured over the generous but failing hand which had, when hope was extinct, united theirs!—In natures finely touched with the pure spirit of Heaven, it is hard to discover which feels most gratification—the obliger, or the obliged: yet, in her father's eyes, it added a charm to the many comprehended in Julia, to perceive that she would not have it remembered that she had made at once the fortune and the happiness of Henry; who, on his part, proud only with the mean, felt it but as an added enjoyment to owe every good to Julia and her bountiful father.

A little time stemmed in each bosom its conflux of passions, and the fair Julia suddenly

denly recollected the very singular circumstances under which she had been married. She cast a surprised eye upon her *robe de chambre*, nor did she forget her little morning cap; but glancing it towards the dishevelled hair and careless attire of Henry, she thought that she had never seen him look so handsome; and though woman enough to prefer propriety, she was angel enough to know that virtue makes it.

"I have now," resumed Mr. Pembroke, "my beloved children, acquitted myself of half my duty—and only half: had I ventured this discovery one week ago, my Henry, when I had told you that I was not your father, I should have been obliged to add, that in the whole world I knew not where you might find that fortunate man—for never in a course of years have I been able to discover even the spot where I saved you. An elucidation which seems almost

almost supernatural, though it may eventually shorten my days, clears up this mystery."

Henry implored the generous man not to exhaust himself in a vain attempt to add to perfect felicity, since, in making him really his son, and the husband of his adored Julia, he had crowned his every wish; nor would he seek in new affinities for doubtful blessings.

"However pleasing this glowing transport may be to my heart, my Henry," returned, with a sigh, Mr. Pembroke, "it adds a keen pang to the many which my conscience has for years given me; since I have selfishly appropriated a good bestowed by Heaven upon others, who may have deplored through life your loss. Yet a liberal education your parents could not have afforded you; for, should they yet exist, you will probably find them, my son, among

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the poorest of the poor; and it will be your fortune to make their latter days happy and affluent. I did not convene all these domestics merely to become spectators of my discourse or conduct, but because there must be some one among them who can end our doubts the moment I give a detail of the means by which you became mine. Eighteen years ago I was parted from my company, and rode through a solitary dell in this country, where it pleased Providence that I should save the life of this youth, then a little creature in petticoats, and entirely alone: the design of appropriating him made me so long delay inquiring to whom he belonged, that when I did, either my ignorance of the name of the particular spot, or some unaccountable change in the face of the country, rendered it impossible for me ever to trace his parentage. I had totally given up the hope, nor would I rob him of the sweet ties of natural affinity which he held as my own son, unless I could have ensur-

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ed to him a larger as well as juster portion of natural affection: yet my heart and my conscience have long been at variance on his account, and it was only by resolving to give him my Julia, that I could find out how to reconcile them. When I accompanied Lady Trevallyn to Mr. Aubrey's the other day, I observed in their eyes a wish for unreserved discourse, which made me, through delicacy, wander into the parsonage garden: beyond it I saw an orchard; and, towering over the fruit-trees, at the extremity, I discovered a singular circle of irregular stones, which appeared to me to be a Druidical monument. Astonished that so remarkable an object in a prospect should be no where visible from the Castle, I advanced to survey it more accurately. I then perceived that it was merely a naked rock, washed bare by time and storms. It was not, however, the less a curiosity for being natural; and I ventured down between a cleft in the stones, where steps had

been

been cut to a pool of water, wide and deep, from whence I guessed the family drew their daily supply. Though the ground became declining and slippery, I reached the verge of the water safely, nor would my feet then probably have failed me, had I not suddenly cast my eyes on the object where Henry very nearly lost his little life, and mine would certainly have terminated, but for the instantaneous plunge and vigorous exertions of his melancholy friend—though how he happened to be there I know not. The object I mean is, the rude and singular bridge which crosses the cheeks of rock where the stream overflows, and, rushing down, forms another pool below:—from that bridge the sweet child must have fallen, when I dragged him out of the lower water."

"Almighty God!" cried the venerable Aubrey, sinking feebly on his knees, and raising his eyes and hands with meekly im-

pressive

pressive devotion to Heaven, "thou who never utterly forsakest those who humbly rely on thee, let the gratitude of thy servant become acceptable in thy sight!—less for restoring this youth to the name and honours of his ancient family, though great in that is thy mercy, than for relieving my aged heart from the weight of misery, the dread of guilt!—My darling child was then only unfortunate, not sinful—she sunk into the pool in the maternal act of attempting to save her lovely boy, and rose a spotless angel to thy presence! Blessed art thou in what thou givest and what thou takest away!—Son of my beloved Agnes—"

A deep convulsive groan silenced the excellent man, and from its resemblance in sound to that which Mr. Pembroke had heard in the dead of the night, seemed to him a summons from the other world. He hastily signed to the servants, who drew open

open the bed-curtains, and all eyes were fixed at once upon Cary—pale, agonised, heart-wrung, yet making, with outstretched arms, his speechless claim to Henry. The name of Agnes had revealed the whole to the affectionate youth; he flew to his father's knees, and received his head upon his bosom.—"Son of my angel Agnes! ever intuitively the object of my tenderest affections," sobbed the veteran with a kind of heart-broken joy, "art thou then thus strangely, thus blessedly given to me?—Life flows back too rapidly, and chokes me with excess of happiness—I feel the debility of very childhood.—Yet proudly now, my Edmund, I resume the long abjured name of Powis, since thou wilt heir it—since even the grave restores half of my buried treasure. Yes, I now behold without abhorrence this mansion; for it will henceforward have a master who might grace a throne.—Julia!—generous Julia! you

you are likewise become the lovely owner of this borrowed home, and you with Edmund Powis must bid us all welcome here."

"And has your poor Caroline no claim to make?" interrupted Lady Trevallyn, with enchanting sweetness—"unkind brother, to suffer us all so long to number you among the dead. Henry," added she, affectionately, holding out her hand, "you loved me when I had no claim upon your heart—love me not the less when you know me for your aunt."

"Father ever revered!—ever beloved!" cried the veteran, dropping with deep devotion at the feet of Mr. Aubrey, "reproach me not, even by a look, for my silence:—had I loved you less, I should long, long since have sought you; for I have existed only in the precincts of your dwelling, lain whole days by the side of the pool which ingulfed all my worldly hopes and yours: but

but could I dare to present to the childless, the venerable father of Agnes, a wretch who had in her loss utterly impoverished him?—Take then, in this precious boy, my only, my rich compensation—And you too, glorious-minded Pembroke, must, in the right of this our mutual son, pardon me those harsh repulsive manners which I dared not alter! To have yielded but a little was, to a nature like mine, to have yielded all—for I am a frail wretch, compounded of extremes. Neither could I in this house venture to mingle in society:—total abstraction alone saved me from discovery. Had I not lived, though I knew not why, on our Edmund's looks, I should instantaneously have turned with abhorrence from this gate, when it opened not to me as its master. Great indeed must be my involuntary paternal tenderness, since it has induced me to wander about my natural home so long, a disinherited outcast."

"Brother!"

"Brother!" cried Lady Trevallyn, bursting into tears, "treat not so hardly our poor father's memory; whom, without cause, you now condemn. You have not, perhaps, perused his will: it was executed, as we afterwards found, on the day following that when your lovely and pious wife, so sweetly and humbly, presented your son in the church to those eyes which never would, till that moment, behold him. Conscience and religion seconded so judicious a claim on Sir Hubert's feelings, and, destroying all former wills, he immediately made the one which was at his death established. It gives to you, it is true, a limited income, and no power; but to your child the whole of the Powis estates are bequeathed, without restriction, should he reach one-and-twenty. My second son was, if Edmund died, to become the next heir; but I was not marriageable when the will was made, nor did I believe that I should ever rear a second son, for I lost three in as many years; so

that I thought Heaven visited on me the sins of my forefathers. When Edmund, with his mother, was supposed to have perished, the cry of the people was against our poor father's cruelty, in driving her to such despair—for, alas! no circumstance ever came to light which might have lessened the horror and misery we all felt in believing the desperate act her own. Your father suffered, I believe, almost as much as Mr. Aubrey. Never from that moment could he endure to be seen: he thought that every finger made him its mark—every voice whispered, as he passed, execration; and, too surely, much of evil which he knew not, was from that moment imputed to him. Your last letter from Flanders, whatever its contents, proved a death-stroke to your father—from that hour I do not remember hearing him utter your name: but I have seen, from involuntary recollection, many and many a tear stream in silence down his aged cheek. The horror he ever afterwards had

had of the rocks and waterfall (till then, you well know, his favourite objects, in our view from the back of the Castle) made him order the poplar plantation to be enlarged, which now shuts it quite out; and across the dell he threw a wide stone bridge, with a high parapet; and thus, having choked up the road below, made the wood soon spread, and filled the hollow: the trees are since so shot up, that those persons who are not previously told, can never suppose themselves to be passing over a bridge at all.—Thus, but for an almost miraculous intervention of Providence, which gathered together on this only spot all the parties concerned, might Mr. Pembroke have left the country, utterly ignorant of the long-sought dell, though he daily crossed it. It was a great surprise, I well remember, to us all, that Edmund's body could never be found; since that of his dear unfortunate mother was soon dragged up, still holding in her hands his little shoes, which she no doubt

was going to put on, when, escaping from her arms, the heedless babe ran to the spot which cost her a life that she would not have wished prolonged if he had perished. But the pool is seated in the solid rock, which has many fissures, and it was not doubted but that some one of them had been wide enough to ingulf a child so young."

"Alas! had I not been poor even to distress," sighed Mr. Aubrey, "I would have had the water drained off: though every thing indicated that the precious child was lodged where his mother was found: but, alas! I had not the means. Yet, though the sweet sufferer had long been lonely and unhappy, she had always seemed patient and pious. Terrible, therefore, was it to me to be obliged to conclude that she had at last despaired.—How brightly did the sun shine on the dismal morning!—I well remember that I had a small patch of corn yet uncut on the far side of the mountain,

and

and our only servant had been sent at break of day thither. Before I followed, I just looked into my poor girl's room, and saw her with the babe at her knees, hearing his prayers in Welsh; for she had taught him no other language, that she might give him the more chance of winning Sir Hubert's affections, who was blindly partial to his own tongue. I kissed them both, and gave Agnes, with my blessing, such comfort as my God gave me. Alas! I returned to a desolated home—from that moment ever solitary and cheerless."

"If I had staid but one day longer at St. Hilary," said an old waiting-woman of Lady Trevallyn's, "I might have told something—though not much neither; and then one never dares to speak to one's betters of their sorrows, though one's heart is ready to break for them. That very morning my old lady had discharged me, only because, as

as she said, Miss Caroline was too fond of her poor servant; and so, God bless her, she is perhaps at this blessed moment, for she took me again as soon as she married. I was a light body then, all but my heart, and that Heaven knows was heavy enough. Jogging behind Jerry over that side of the mountain which looks down upon the parsonage, I was gaping every moment back at the castle, when, all of a sudden, I heard a very loud screech, and the echoes there made it quite awful. I looked into the orchard, where I saw Master Powis—for so we all called the sweet child, though Sir Hubert would not allow of it—running along as hard as he could set foot to ground, and his poor mamma was in full chase of him, in, as I then thought, a desperate passion; but I doubt now, sweet young lady, it was only of terror. However, Jerry and the horse jogged on, and I lost sight of them both among the apple-

trees

trees in a moment. The coach was just setting off for London, and I had been months there before I heard of this melancholy misfortune. I little thought till now that it happened upon the very day I went by, or I would have spoke—not that my speaking would have done any good."

"Misjudging woman!" interrupted the silver-headed Aubrey, "sincerity ever does good. It is at least the solemn acquittal of our own consciences.—From what horrors of mind would you have saved both me and the hard-hearted Sir Hubert, could we have been convinced that the lost Agnes had not been impelled by despair to fly in the face of her God, and drag down our grey hairs with sorrow almost to the grave!"

"Let us not destroy the universal satisfaction of this blessed discovery," said Mr. Pembroke, by reverting to miseries which

no care of ours could prevent, and all have so severely suffered by. And now good people, you may retire.—Go, prepare the marriage dinner which you all shall partake: and since you are now convinced that Castle St. Hilary has rather been the seat of misfortune than guilt, let me never from this moment hear of another ghost or goblin."

In the full persuasion that this discovery would give repose to the dead as well as the living, the domestics withdrew;—impatient to publish whatever they had been told, and throw open the cellar, alike for the recovery of the heir, and the marriage of Miss Pembroke.

"Of ghosts or goblins in this place we never more, I believe, shall hear," said Sir Hubert, sighing; "for could I have dissipated the general alarm without implicating

myself,

myself, I could have told you three nights ago, that the perturbed spirit, who walked the castle at midnight, was not my father's but my own. Recollect my extraordinary situation, and this will not surprise you.—When the entreaties of my beloved son won me, against all my prior determinations, to return with him to England, I knew none of his family—cared not for them nor their residence. We found Mr. Pembroke's carriage and servants waiting for us at Portsmouth; and the impatience of Henry urged him to post night as well as day. I was almost overwhelmed with fatigue, while, buoyed up by youth and tender expectation, his constitution failed not. The servant who rode before us paid all the charges; we therefore drove through the towns without heeding them; and I naturally supposed that Farleigh, where I had been accustomed to direct my letters, must be the place to which we were thus eagerly posting. I had sunk into a stupor, which

had

had all the effect of sleep but its relief, when the chaise slowly began to ascend this mountain, nor do I know how long it continued to do so, as I was half roused only by its stopping. I saw Henry leap out, and happy, happy strangers fondly flew to embrace him: while I, unnoticed by all, uninteresting to any one, prepared cautiously to alight.—The grey dawn was now peeping; and as I sat my foot upon the step of the chaise, I coldly raised my eyes to—my father's castle! Had he risen from the grave and stood before me at the gate, hardly could I have felt more sensibly the shock!—my intellects, my knees, my very existence seemed to fail me!—I was in this state borne into the breakfast-room, and, on reviving, found myself seated in that lost father's well-known gouty chair.—Too complicated were my feelings, to admit of description.—The pangs of filial love—the consciousness of being an alien—the conviction that the honours of my family

mily were no more—when the mansion was tenanted, and I, I myself was become a stranger in the house where I was born!—an accumulation of distracting feelings almost made me a maniac. Whether to spring up, and at once execrate, abjure the scene of so many sorrows, or, for the sake of the generous youth whom I had so far followed, bury the knowledge in my own bosom, was the struggle—a tremendous struggle I found it!—The servants, having no idea that my suffering was mental, imputed my sighs, my groans, my inward agony, only to a hurt on my ancle, with which they aroused Henry.—Bringing this angel of light in his hand, and followed by her benignant father, the beloved youth flew to inquire into my ailments, and, by the generous sympathy of his nature, bound me for ever to the scene of my misery.—Julia too, by I know not what charm, arrested my attention.—Never, since I last looked on Agnes, had my eyes dwelt with pleasure on

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the face of woman, till they fixed on that of my Henry's beloved:—I was tempted to worship her as a vision of heaven.—I knew not how to bring so sympathetic, so angelic a being, down to the level of mere mortality.—During my confinement, often with Henry did his lovely Julia come to watch by my bedside, and soon they divided all that remains of an exhausted heart.—So powerful became their mutual influence, that I began to fancy it a mournful pleasure to wander round the domains which I ought to have inherited. The first peasant I met at a word informed me of all that I could wish to learn; for to what rustic was the death of the lovely Agnes and my infant heir unknown?—Having obtained this important agonising recital from an unobserving stranger, I shut myself up in almost impenetrable gloom and abstraction; devoured by a variety of bitter recollections, which each surrounding object fed.—Nor did I dare to impute my flight from society to its true

true motives, for that would have drawn every eye upon me, and made me now the object of idle wonder, and now the wretch of importunate kindness.—Solitude became my only safety, silence my resource. Mr. Pembroke, with his usual indulgence, allowed me to pursue that course which his son no doubt told him was habitual; and I again procured a key to the well-known church, where I passed days and nights on the cold stone which covers my angel and her brother. The pool where she perished became another of my haunts, and that I found to be wholly my own; for never foot approached it, till Heaven, in its own good time, sent Mr. Pembroke thither. With a burning brain and bleeding heart, it was not very likely that I should obtain wholesome rest; and my comfortless nights generally elapsed in vain, vain visions of the past. Sometimes, in all the sweet secresy of our bridal love, and the bloom of her virgin

gin beauty, I seemed to clasp my Agnes to my unswerving heart; and then, no doubt, I unconsciously arose, and softly paced, as I once had been used to do, to the chamber my wife once occupied: for that was the room in which Miss Pembroke's maid first fancied she saw the spirit.—When more dreary images took possession of my sleep, I am apt to suppose that I trod at midnight the path to the church, wrapt, perhaps, only in a loose gown; for I sometimes found myself in the morning chilled, worn, and weary:—from thence, I imagine, I must have been returning, when the servants took the alarm, and gave it by their extravagant descriptions, which were 'the very coinage of their fears.'—The other night, though of that intrusion no one complained, I dreamt that I knelt at the bedside of my father; and, before I could reach my own, by some strange chance or noise awaked: on this conviction of my own infirmity, I considered,

considered, and discovered how I should avoid in future causing this frightful alarm."

"It was then *you*," said Mr. Pembroke after a pause, "whose midnight visitation so shook my nerves, and seemed even to me of another world.—'Thus conscience does make cowards of us all!' Yet happy, perhaps, was it that you thus threw me upon mine, which never afterwards allowed me rest or comfort till this hour—an hour that has, I think, enriched every body but this sweet lady's second son."

"What my Cecil must lose in wealth," returned Lady Trevallyn, "his elder brother and I shall gain in peace of mind; for it is dreadful to see your children, when blessed with enough, unnaturally struggling for too much!—yet Lord Trevallyn was early taught by his father to consider the preference mine gave to his brother as

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an act of weakness and injustice: he has, therefore, always declared his intention of trying his claim by law; and as to lose the inheritance of Powis would leave my younger child destitute, I have had the first legal opinions on the tenure by which it is held for him.—All have agreed that there is an error in the wording of my father's will, which must eventually give the whole property to his next heir.—Most strangely is that heir restored to us in his only son; and long may Sir Hubert Powis enjoy, and fully may he bequeath the estates of his ancestors!"

"Your Cecil, my Caroline," rejoined Sir Hubert, "shall rather gain than lose by the re-appearance of his uncle; for I will at once equally divide between him and my own Edmund the accumulated rents of the intervening years, as an immediate provision for both: nor shall more be wanting

to

to my nephew's future welfare:—we will teach him that a little wealth will suffice, with content and virtue: the riches of the East cannot save those from poverty who are without them."

The blessing of heaven, from this moment, descended on all the relatives so fortuitously assembled at Castle St. Hilary.—Sir Hubert Powis, restored to his rank and rights, soon lost, in the endearing habits of social life and exercised benevolence, those wild trances which solitude and sorrow had dignified to himself as supernatural.—With Lady Trevallyn and Mr. Pembroke, he formed one family, under the direction of Edmund and Julia. They all three bore as sponsors to the font the infant son of that amiable pair; and the venerable Aubrey lived to baptise another heir to the Powis name—then, full of years and honour, he was contentedly gathered to his Agnes and Llewellyn.

THE POET'S CONCLUSION.

The voice of my most favourite companion suddenly ceased, and I awoke—yes, reader, courteous or uncourteous, I really awoke—from a species of day-dreams to which I have all my life been subject: and if you should find these as pleasant as I have done, why we may henceforward recite tales without going to Canterbury, and travel half the world over without quitting our own dear fire-sides.

S. L.

THE END.

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